THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

MARY GOULD DAVIS

Theodora Post.

Christmas 1922

THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

A TREASURY OF OLD AND NEW POEMS

COMPILED BY
MARY GOULD DAVIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
DOROTHY CANFIELD

NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

Copyright, 1922, by
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

All Rights Reserved

Printed in the United States of America

To
BARBARA CLAIRE SADLER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The compiler gratefully acknowledges help and criticism in the making of this book from Mary Percival of Hunter College High School, Louise Townsend Nicholl and Carolyn Hall of *The Measure,* Josephine Daskam Bacon and her little daughter, Deborah Bacon.

Thanks are also due Mrs. William Sharp for her courtesy in allowing the use of *An Autumnal Evening, Sleep* and *The Field Mouse* by William Sharp; Lady Glenconnor for her *Echo, The Legend of the Tortoise* and *The Legend of the Saintfoin;* Amy Lowell for her *A Little Garden;* John Masefield for his *Tewksbury Road, Sea-fever* and twenty six lines from *The Everlasting Mercy;* John Drinkwater for his *Feckenham Men* and *Sunrise on Rydal Water;* William Butler Yeats for his *Faeries' Song* and *The Lake Isle of Innisfree;* Mrs. Meynell for her *The Shepherdess,* and to the following publishers:

The Norman Remington Company for *Lullaby* and *The Others* from "An Epilogue" by Seumas O'Sullivan; Doubleday, Page and Company for *The Ballad of the King's Jest, The Feet of the Young Men* and *The Love Song of Har Dyal* from the Inclusive Edition of Rudyard Kipling's poems;

Charles Scribner's Sons for *A Legend of Service* and *Light between the Trees* from "Music and Other Poems" by Henry Van Dyke, *Fairy Bread, The Wind* and *The Celestial Surgeon* from "Poems" by Robert Louis Stevenson and *Little Blue Pigeon* from "Poems of Childhood" by Eugene Field; Small, Maynard and Company for *The Sea Gypsy* by Richard Hovey, *A Vagabond Song* by Bliss Carman from "More Songs from Vagabondia" and *An April Morning* by Bliss Carman from "April Airs"; Henry Holt and Company for *Lullaby, Martha, The Mocking Fairy, Three Cherry Trees* and *Will Ever?* from "Collected Poems" by Walter De La Mare; the Houghton Mifflin Company for *A Little Garden* from "A Dome of Many-colored Glass" by Amy Lowell, *Feckenham Men* and *Sunrise on Rydal Water* from "Poems 1908-1919" by John Drinkwater, *Kallunborg Church, Skipper Ireson's Ride* and thirty-five lines from *Snowbound* from "Complete Poems" by John Greenleaf Whittier, *Bedouin Song* from "Poems" by Bayard Taylor, *The Skeleton in Armor* from "Complete Poems" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and *Pandora's Songs* from "The Firebringer" by William Vaughn Moody; the John Lane Company for *Lullaby* and *Visions* from "My Ship" by Edmund Leamy; the Macmillan Company for *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* from "Poems, 1921" by William Butler

Yeats, *Tewksbury Road* and *Sea-fever* from "The Story of a Round House" and twenty six lines from *The Everlasting Mercy* by John Masefield; Dodd, Mead and Company for *Faeries' Song* from "The Land of Hearts Desire" by William Butler Yeats; the George H. Doran Company for *The Fairies Have Never a Penny to Spend* from "Fairies and Chimneys" by Rose Fyleman; and the Frederick A. Stokes Company for *Fairies, Hills, Spring Song* and *Tree-toads* from "Poems by a Little Girl" by Hilda Conkling, *Forty Singing Seamen,* and *Song* from *The Forest of Wild Thyme,* in "Collected Poems, Vol. I" by Alfred Noyes and *A Catch for Spring* from *A Faun's Holiday* in "Ardours and Endurances" by Robert Nichols.

A FOREWORD

Because real lovers of poetry know that time and place are of little importance, the poems in this book are brought together with no sense of the period in which they were written. From "The Song of Solomon" to Hilda Conkling's "Spring Song" they are here because they are beautiful, with a beauty that neither years nor events can change. It is this aloofness, this independence of circumstance that gives poetry its great value. From childhood, almost from infancy, through womanhood we may carry it with us, turning to it constantly and finding in it always something to satisfy our need.

My own love for it dates back to a mother who read and repeated poetry to us children as naturally as she breathed; to early mornings when we younger ones cuddled into bed beside her and listened to "Kallunborg Church," always associated in our minds with the old folk-tale of "Rumpelstilkskin," or "The Skeleton in Armor"; to winter evenings around a blazing fire where we roasted apples hung on strings from the mantel above while she read to us from "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" or "The

Rime of the Ancient Mariner." She knew Whittier, visited at his house as a schoolgirl and quoted him to us until the ideas and ideals of the Quaker poet became unconsciously a part of our philosophy. And how well I remember her enthusiasm over Kipling when his poems began to appear in the late eighties! Her quick response to the strange rhythm, the surge and vigor of his verse brought us stumbling behind her, eager to see and hear all that she saw and heard in this new singer.

This response to poetry comes to different people differently, but if we live our lives without it we lose one of the good things that the world has to give.

This book is only a taste of that good thing. It is suggestive rather than complete, a stimulus to appetite rather than a satisfying meal. It was made in the hope that through it the modern girl would find a key to the treasures that the poets of to-day and yesterday are giving and have given us.

MARY GOULD DAVIS.

New York
April, 1922.

CONTENTS

PART I

MELODY

		PAGE
The Lake Isle of Innisfree	*William Butler Yeats*	3
Margaritae Sorori	*William Ernest Henley*	4
The Love Song of Har Dyal	*Rudyard Kipling*	6
Lullaby	*Walter De La Mare*	7
The Song of Songs	*Solomon*	8
To Sleep	*William Wordsworth*	10
The Shepherdess	*Alice Meynell*	11
Lullaby	*Seumas O'Sullivan*	12
Sleep	*William Sharp*	14
Ode to a Nightingale	*John Keats*	16
Pandora's Songs from "The Firebringer"	*William V. Moody*	20
Little Blue Pigeon	*Eugene Field*	23
Piping Down the Valleys Wild	*William Blake*	25
The Wind	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	27
Lullaby	*Edmund Leamy*	28
Dover Beach	*Matthew Arnold*	30
The Solitary Reaper	*William Wordsworth*	32
Oh, Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast	*Robert Burns*	34
Fair Helen	*Anonymous*	35
The Legend of the Saint-foin	*Pamela Tennant*	37
Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity	*John Milton*	39

		PAGE
THREE YEARS SHE GREW	*William Wordsworth*	41
LULLABY	*Alfred Tennyson*	43
A SONNET	*William Wordsworth*	44
THE CELESTIAL SURGEON	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	45
A SONNET	*Elizabeth B. Browning*	46
BEDOUIN SONG	*Bayard Taylor*	47
SONGS OF SEVEN	*Jean Ingelow*	49
TO A SKYLARK	*Percy Bysshe Shelley*	60
THE SONG OF DAVID	*Christopher Smart*	65
THE SHEPHERD BOY SINGS	*John Bunyan*	66
TRUE LOVE	*William Shakespeare*	67
MARY'S GIRLHOOD	*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*	68

PART II

THE PIPES OF PAN

AN APRIL MORNING	*Bliss Carman*	73
TO DAFFODILS	*Robert Herrick*	74
A CATCH FOR SPRING	*Robert Nichols*	75
SONG FROM "PIPPA PASSES"	*Robert Browning*	77
SPRING SONG	*Hilda Conkling*	78
DAFFODILS	*William Wordsworth*	80
HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD	*Robert Browning*	82
A CHANTED CALENDAR	*Sydney Dobell*	84
UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE	*William Shakespeare*	86
TEWKSBURY ROAD	*John Masefield*	87
THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN	*Rudyard Kipling*	89
VISIONS	*Edmund Leamy*	94
A VAGABOND SONG	*Bliss Carman*	96
LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES	*Henry Van Dyke*	97
THE SEA GYPSY	*Richard Hovey*	100
AT SEA	*Allen Cunningham*	101
SEA FEVER	*John Masefield*	103

PAGE

HILLS . . . . . *Hilda Conkling* 105
AN AUTUMNAL EVENING . . . *William Sharp* 106
MY GARDEN . . . . . *Thomas E. Brown* 107
A LITTLE GARDEN . . . . . *Amy Lowell* 108
SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER . . *John Drinkwater* 109
LINES FROM "THE EVERLASTING MERCY" . . . . . *John Masefield* 111
LINES FROM "SNOWBOUND" . . *John G. Whittier* 113

PART III

ENCHANTMENT

FAIRIES . . . . . *Hilda Conkling* 117
FAIRY LAND . . . . . *William Shakespeare* 118
WILL EVER? . . . . . *Walter De La Mare* 119
THE OTHERS . . . . . *Seumas O'Sullivan* 120
FAERIES' SONG . . . . *William Butler Yeats* 123
ECHO . . . . . *Pamela Tennant* 124
LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI . . . *John Keats* 126
SONG . . . . . *Alfred Noyes* 129
THE FAIRIES . . . . . *William Allingham* 130
KILMENY . . . . . *James Hogg* 133
THE FAIRIES HAVE NEVER A PENNY TO SPEND . . . . *Rose Fyleman* 138
FAIRY BREAD . . . . . *Robert Louis Stevenson* 139
THE HORNS OF ELFLAND . . *Alfred Tennyson* 140
A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT . *Elizabeth B. Browning* 141
TREE-TOAD . . . . . *Hilda Conkling* 143
THE MOCKING FAIRY . . *Walter De La Mare* 145
TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET . . . . . *Leigh Hunt* 146
THE FIELD MOUSE . . . . . *William Sharp* 147
THE FORSAKEN MERMAN . . . *Matthew Arnold* 148

PART IV

STORIES

		PAGE
MARTHA	*Walter De La Mare*	157
THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S JEST	*Rudyard Kipling*	159
FORTY SINGING SEAMEN	*Alfred Noyes*	164
THE BLESSED DAMOZEL	*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*	171
THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER	*Samuel T. Coleridge*	178
THE LADY OF SHALOTT	*Alfred Tennyson*	206
THE LEGEND OF THE TORTOISE	*Pamela Tennant*	214
THE FECKENHAM MEN	*John Drinkwater*	217
THE THREE CHERRY TREES	*Walter De La Mare*	219
KALLUNBORG CHURCH	*John G. Whittier*	221
THE YARN OF THE *Nancy Bell*	*William S. Gilbert*	225
SAUL	*Robert Browning*	230
A LEGEND OF SERVICE	*Henry Van Dyke*	256
THE SKELETON IN ARMOR	*Henry W. Longfellow*	261
SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE	*John G. Whittier*	268
THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE	*Jean Ingelow*	272

INTRODUCTION

Every educator of value comes at last to the one fundamental axiom, "Don't open doors for the children. Give them the keys." And all of us, educators, and mothers, have to struggle with the temptation to do just the opposite. We see our precious children, to serve whom we would make any sacrifice, imprisoned by the dark dark walls of youth's concentration on self. We know that all around them those walls that seem so stern and fatal are pierced with doorways leading to spacious kingdoms of beauty, grace and interest, free to any one who will turn the keys and step out; and our natural, almost irresistible impulse is to try to lead or push the children over those thresholds.

The temptation thus to hurry natural processes, to pick open the bud, is nowhere more insidious than in the matter of literary appreciation. We cannot believe it possible that there, at least, we cannot help forward the formation of good taste by talking about it, explaining it, analyzing fine poems, teaching literary appreciation in classes, shoving the children through the doors by main force. And nowhere is it more imperative to keep our hands off!

The best we can do here as elsewhere, here perhaps even more than elsewhere, is to see that the right keys are in the children's hands so that when the moment comes, when the mysterious spontaneous impulse arises, the doors will swing open before them.

There are no better keys than the right sort of books if they are owned by the children, not merely consulted in libraries or read in classes, and for children's varying capricious taste there is no better book than the right sort of anthology. Miss Davis has made, it seems to me, exactly the right sort of anthology for girls, for whom nothing had as yet been collected in manageable form. There are poems to touch any one of the infinite variety of girl-temperaments, and to interest any one of the infinite variety of girl moods and phases. A girl who has such a book in her room, who takes it to the country with her, who dips into it as she combs her hair, opens it casually as she wakes in the morning, and reads a favorite poem before she drops asleep, will have more visits from that shy bird called literary appreciation, than in all the hours of listening to lectures in a set course of study.

The moment of awakened sensibility, when great literary art goes home is not to be foretold or brought about by conscious effort. It all comes back to the fundamental axiom, "Don't try to open

doors for children. Give them the keys." Such a book as this anthology may well be just the key your daughter needs when the desire to go out into the glorious country of English poetry comes flittingly to her young heart.

DOROTHY CANFIELD

THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

PART I

Melody

"The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more."

William Wordsworth

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavement grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

MARGARITAE SORORI

A LATE lark twitters in the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing.
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,

MARGARITAE SORORI

Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

THE LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL

ALONE upon the housetops to the North
I turn and watch the lightning in the sky—
The glamour of thy footsteps in the North.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

Below my feet the still bazaar is laid—
Far, far below the weary camels lie—
The camels and the captives of thy raid.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

My father's wife is old and harsh with years
And drudge of all my father's house am I—
My bread is sorrow and my drink is tears.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

RUDYARD KIPLING

LULLABY

SLEEP, sleep, lovely white soul;
The little mouse cheeps plaintively,
The night-bird in the chestnut tree—
They sing together, bird and mouse,
In starlight, in darkness, lonely, sweet,
The wild notes and the faint notes meet—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul;
Amid the lilies floats the moth,
The mole along his galleries goeth
In the dark earth; the summer moon
Looks like a shepherd through the pane
Seeking his feeble lamp again—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul;
Time comes to keep night-watch with thee,
Nodding with roses; and the sea
Saith "Peace! Peace!" amid his foam.
"O be still!"
The wind cries up the whispering hill—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE SONG OF SONGS

"The song of songs, which is Solomon's"

I AM the rose of Sharon,
And the lily of the valleys.
As the lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.
As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, or awake my beloved, till he please.
The voice of my beloved!
Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a roe or a young hart;
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,

He looketh forth at the windows,
Shewing himself through the lattice.
My beloved spake,
And said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines with the tender grape
Give a good smell.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

My beloved is mine,
And I am his;
He feedeth among the lilies
Until the day break and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved,
And be thou like a roe
Or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

SOLOMON

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky:

I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep, by any stealth:
So do not let me wear tonight away:
Without thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE SHEPHERDESS

SHE walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

ALICE MEYNELL

LULLABY

HUSHEEN, the herons are crying
Away in the rain and the sleet,
Flying and flying and flying,
With never a rest for their feet.

But warm in your coverlid nestle,
Wee Bird, till the dawn of the day,
Nor dream of the wild wings that wrestle
In the night and the rain and the grey.

Come, sweetheart, the bright ones would bring you
By the magical meadows and streams,
With the light of your dreaming they build you
A house on the hill of your dreams.

But you stir in your sleep and you murmur,
As though the wild rain and the grey
Wet hills, with the wind ever blowing
Had driven your dreams away.

And dearer the wind in its crying,
And the secrets the wet hills hold,

LULLABY

Than the goldenest place they could find you
In the heart of a country of gold.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

SLEEP

WHILE sways the restless sea
Beyond the shore,
And the waves sing listlessly
Their secret lore,
And the soft fragrant air
From off the deep
Scarce stirs thine outspread hair,—
Sleep!

Far up in purple skies
Great lamps hang out,
White flames that fall and rise
In motley rout;
While fall their silvern rays
O'er crag and steep,
Woodlands and meadow-ways,—
Sleep!

While the moon's amber gleams
Gild rock and flow'r,
Let no untimely dreams
Possess the hour;

SLEEP

Let no vague fears the heart
'Mid slumber keep,
In dreams love hath no smart,—
Sleep!

WILLIAM SHARP

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My senses, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O, for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade into the forest dim.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Away! Away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards;
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdant glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I heard this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown;
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears among the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! Adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music;— Do I wake or sleep?

JOHN KEATS

PANDORA'S SONGS FROM "THE FIRE-BRINGER"

I

I STOOD within the heart of God;
It seemed a place that I had known;
(I was blood-sister to the clod,
Blood-brother to the stone.)

I found my love and labor there,
My house, my raiment, meat and wine,
My ancient rage, my old despair,
Yea, all things that were mine.

I saw the spring and summer pass,
The trees grow bare, and winter come;
All was the same as once it was
Upon my hills at home.

Then suddenly in my own heart
I felt God walk and gaze about;
He spoke; His words seemed held apart
With gladness and with doubt.

"Here is my meat and wine," He said
"My love, my toil, my ancient care;
Here is my cloak, my book, my bed,
And here my old despair.

"Here are my seasons; winter, spring
Summer the same, and autumn spills
The fruits I look for; everything
As on my heavenly hills."

II

Of wounds and sore defeat
I made my battle stay
Wingéd sandals for my feet
I wove of my delay.
Of weariness and fear
I made my shouting spear;
Of loss and doubt, and dread,
And swift oncoming doom
I made a helmet for my head
And a floating plume.
From the shutting mist of death,
From the failure of the breath
I made a battle horn to blow
Across the vales of overthrow.
O hearken, love, the battle horn!
The triumph clear, the silver scorn!

Oh hearken when the echoes bring
Down the grey disastrous morn
Laughter and rallying!

III

Along the earth and up the sky
The Fowler spreads his net:
O soul, what pinions wild and shy
Are on thy shoulders set?
What wings of longing undeterred
Are native to thee, spirit bird?
What sky is thine behind the sky,
For refuge and for ecstasy?
Of all thy heaven of clear delight
Why is each heaven twain,
O soul! that when the lure is cast
Before thy heedless flight,
And thou art snared and taken fast
Within one sky of light,
Behold, the net is empty, the cast is vain,
And from thy circling in the other sky the lyric
laughters rain!

WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY

LITTLE BLUE PIGEON

SLEEP, little pigeon, and fold your wings—
Little blue pigeon with velvet eyes;
Sleep to the singing of mother-bird swinging—
Swinging the nest where her little one lies.

Away out yonder I see a star—
Silvery star with a tinkling song;
To the soft dew falling I hear it calling—
Calling and tinkling the night along.

In through the window a moonbeam comes—
Little gold moonbeam with misty wings;
All silently creeping, it asks; "Is he sleeping—
Sleeping and dreaming while mother sings?"

Up from the sea there floats the sob
Of the waves that are breaking upon the shore,
As though they were groaning in anguish, and moaning,
Bemoaning the ship that shall come no more.

LITTLE BLUE PIGEON

But Sleep, little pigeon, and fold your wings—
  Little blue pigeon, with mournful eyes;
Am I not singing?—see, I am swinging—
  Swinging the nest where my darling lies.

EUGENE FIELD

PIPING DOWN THE VALLEYS WILD

PIPING down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me;

"Pipe a song about a lamb,"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again."
So I piped; he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sung the song again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write,
In a book that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen;
And I stained the water clear
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

WILLIAM BLAKE

THE WIND

I SAW you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O Wind, a-blowing all day long,
O Wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all.
O Wind a-blowing all day long,
O Wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O Wind, a-blowing all day long,
O Wind, that sings so loud a song!

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

LULLABY

OH, honey, li'l honey, come and lay yo' wooly head,
Upon yo' mammy's bosom, play at possum bein' dead,
Fo'a li'l babe am sleepy, an' it's time to go to bed,
So, come, ma li'l baby, ma li'l lovin' baby,
Ah, sleep ma li'l baby,
Sleepy, sleepy sleep.

Don't yo' cry yo' li'l eyes out, sho' de summer day am done,
An' de flowers am gone bye-bye wit' de great big yellow sun,
An' de stars am all a-peepin' fo' to ketch him on de run,
But yo' must sleep, ma baby, ma li'l lovin' baby;
Ah, sleep ma li'l baby,
Sleepy, sleepy sleep.

LULLABY

Ah, hush, ma pickaninny, sho' yo's mammy's li'l prize,
But de san' man am a-comin' fo' to close a baby's eyes,
An' de angels all am creepin' fro' de splendor ob de skies
To guard a li'l baby, ma li'l lovin' baby;
So sleep, ma li'l baby,
Sleepy, sleepy sleep.

EDMUND LEAMY

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling
At their return, upon the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

DOVER BEACH

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands;
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard,
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago;

Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of today
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

OH, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

OH, WERT thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewell in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

ROBERT BURNS

FAIR HELEN

I WISH I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me!

O think na but my heart was sair
When my Love dropt down and spake nae mair!
I laid her down wi' meikle care
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackéd him in pieces sma',

I hackéd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
Since my love died for me.

ANONYMOUS

THE LEGEND OF THE SAINTFOIN

"The country folk do hold this plant to be in very truth the hay that lay in the manger of Bethlehem. And though it were midwinter, the legend tells, it blossomed red."

OLD HERBAL.

MELCHIOR, Gaspar, and Balthazar,
Led aright by the beckoning star
Come where the gazing shepherds are,
(I heard a Maid lullaby sing.)

Come where the stable's shelter stands,
A maiden holds in her mother's hands,
A young child wrapped in swaddling bands,
(Now hush thee, my heavenly King.)

Joseph, come rede me this thing, she said,
The hay that lies at my young son's head,
Hath blossomed anew as it were not dead.
(I hear a Maid lullaby sing)

And he that stood with the feeding kine
Answered Mary, thy child divine
Is come, and behold it for a sign,
(Now hush thee, my heavenly King.)

THE LEGEND OF THE SAINTFOIN

Mary, now cradle thy young child low,
The night has fallen, the great winds blow,
And sheep are lost in the driving snow,
And many are wandering.

God send we all when He comes our way,
May know Christ's coming and bid Him stay,
May find new life like the Holy Hay,
And a soul's awakening.

PAMELA TENNANT

ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, the Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,

MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet;
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honor first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd
fire.

JOHN MILTON

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;

Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—the work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This health, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LULLABY

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea.
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

ALFRED TENNYSON

A SONNET

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON.

IF I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain,
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose Thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

A SONNET

GO from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forebore . . .
Thy touch upon my palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes, the tears of two.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

BEDOUIN SONG

FROM the desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry;
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book
unfold.

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,

BEDOUIN SONG

And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book
unfold.

My steps are nightly driven
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book
unfold.

BAYARD TAYLOR

SONGS OF SEVEN

SEVEN TIMES ONE. EXULTATION.

THERE'S no dew left on the daisies and
clover,
There's no rain left in heaven;
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter:
My birthday lessons are done;
The lambs play always, they know no better;
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;
You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is
failing —
Your are nothing now but a bow.

O moon, have you done something wrong in
heaven
That God has hidden your face?

I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

O columbine open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell!
O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper
That hangs in your clear green bell!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it;
I will not steal them away;
I am old! you may trust me, linnet, linnet—
I am seven times one today.

SEVEN TIMES TWO. ROMANCE.

You bells in the steeple, ring, ring out your changes,
How many soever they be,
And let the brown meadow-lark's note as he ranges
Come over, come over to me.

Yet birds' clearest carol by fall or by swelling
No magical sense conveys,
And bells have forgotten their old art of telling
The fortune of future days.

"Turn again, turn again," once they rang cheerily,
While a boy listened alone;
Made his heart yearn again, musing so wearily
All by himself on a stone.

Poor bells! I forgive you; your good days are over,
And mine, they are yet to be;
No listening, no longing shall aught, aught discover
You leave the story to me.

The foxglove shoots out of the green matted heather
Preparing her hoods of snow;
She was idle, and slept till the sunshiny weather;
O, children take long to grow.

I wish and I wish that the spring would go faster,
Nor long summer bide so late:
And I could grow on like the foxglove and aster,
For some things are ill to wait.

I wait for the day when dear hearts shall discover,
While dear hands are laid on my head;
"The child is a woman, the book may close over,
For all the lessons are said."

I wait for my story—the birds cannot sing it,
Not one, as he sits on the tree;

The bells cannot ring it, but long years, O bring it!
Such as I wish it to be.

SEVEN TIMES THREE. LOVE.

I leaned out of my window, I smelt the white clover,
Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate;
Now, if there be footsteps, he comes, my one lover—
Hush, nightingale, hush! O, sweet nightingale, wait
Till I listen and hear
If a step draweth near,
For my love he is late!

The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
A cluster of stars hang like fruit in the tree,
The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer:
To what art thou listening, and what dost thou see?
Let the star-clusters grow,
Let the sweet waters flow,
And cross quickly to me.

You night moths that hover where honey brims over,
From sycamore blossoms, or settle for sleep;
You glowworms, shine out, and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.

Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep—

Too deep for swift telling; and yet, my one lover,
I've conned thee an answer, it waits thee tonight.
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white
clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took
flight;
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

SEVEN TIMES FOUR. MATERNITY.

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
When the wind wakes how they rock in the
grasses,
And dance with the cuckoo-buds slender and small!
Here's two bonny boys, and here's mother's own
lasses
Eager to gather them all.

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
Mother shall thread them a daisy chain;
Sing them a song of the pretty hedge sparrow,

That loved her brown little ones, loved them full fain:
Sing, "Heart, thou art wide though the house be but narrow,"
Sing once, and sing it again.

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
Sweet waggling cowslips they bend and they bow;
A ship sails afar over warm ocean waters,
And haply one musing doth stand at her prow.
O bonny brown sons, and O sweet little daughters,
Maybe he thinks on you now!

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
A sunshiney world full of laughter and leisure,
And fresh hearts unconscious of sorrow and thrall!
Send down on their pleasure smiles passing its measure,
God that is over us all!

SEVEN TIMES FIVE. WIDOWHOOD.

I sleep and rest, my heart makes moan
Before I am well awake;
Let me bleed! O let me alone,
Since I must not break!

For children wake, though fathers sleep
With a stone at foot and head:
O sleepless God, forever keep,
Keep both living and dead!

I lift mine eyes, and what to see
And a world happy and fair!
I have not wished it to mourn with me—
Comfort is not there.

O what anear but golden brooms,
But a waste of reedy rills!
O what afar but the fine glooms
On the rare blue hills!

I shall not die, but live forlore—
How bitter it is to part!
O to meet thee, my love, once more!
O my heart, my heart!

No more to hear, no more to see!
O that an echo might wake
And waft one note of thy psalm to me
Ere my heart-strings break!

I should know it how faint soe'er,
And with angel voices blent;

O once to feel thy spirit anear;
I could be content!

Or once between the gates of gold,
While an entering angel trod,
But once thee sitting to behold
On the hills of God!

SEVEN TIMES SIX. GIVING IN MARRIAGE.

To bear, to nurse, to rear,
To watch, and then to lose:
To see my bright ones disappear,
Drawn up like morning dews—
To bear, to nurse, to rear,
To watch, and then to lose:
This have I done when God drew near
Among his own to choose.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
And with thy lord depart
In tears that he, as soon as shed,
Will let no longer smart.
To hear, to heed, to wed,
This while thou didst I smiled,
For now it was not God who said,
"Mother, give me thy child."

O fond, O fool, and blind!
To God I gave with tears;
But when a man like grace would find,
My soul put by her fears—
O fond, O fool, and blind!
God guards in happier spheres;
That man will guard where he did bind
Is hope for unknown years.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
Fair lot that maidens choose,
Thy mother's tenderest words are said,
Thy face no more she views;
Thy mother's lot, my dear,
She doth in nought accuse;
Her lot to bear, to nurse, to rear,
To love—and then to lose.

SEVEN TIMES SEVEN. LONGING FOR HOME.

A song of a boat:—
There was once a boat on a billow.
Lightly she rocked to her port remote,
And the foam was white in her wake like snow,
And her frail mast bowed when the breeze would
blow,
And bent like a wand of willow.

I shaded mine eyes when a boat one day
Went curtseying over the billow,
I marked her course till a dancing mote
She faded out in the moonlit foam,
And I stayed behind in the dear loved home;
And my thoughts all day were about the boat
And my dreams upon the pillow.

I pray you hear my song of a boat,
For it is but short:—
My boat you shall find none fairer afloat,
In river or port.
Long I looked out for the lad she bore,
On the open desolate sea,
And I think he sailed to the heavenly shore,
For he came not back to me—
Ah me!

A song of a nest:—
There was once a nest in a hollow:
Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm, and full to the brim—
Vetches leaned over it purple and dim,
With buttercup buds to follow.

I pray you hear my song of a nest,
For it is not long;—
You shall never light, in a summer quest,
The bushes among—

Shall never light on a prouder sitter,
A fairer nestful, nor ever know
A softer sound than their tender twitter,
That wind-like did come and go.

I had a nestful once of my own,
Ah, happy, happy I!
Right dearly I loved them; but when they were
grown
They spread out their wings to fly—
O, one after one they flew away
Far up to the heavenly blue,
To the better country, the upper day,
And—I wish I was going too.

I pray you what is the nest to me,
My empty nest?
And what is the shore where I stood to see
My boat sail down to the west?
Can I call that home where I anchor yet,
Though my good man has sailed?
Can I call that home where my nest was set,
Now all its hope hath failed?
Nay, but the port where my sailor went,
And the land where my nestlings be:
There is the home where my thoughts are sent,
The only home for me—
Ah me!

JEAN INGELOW

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The deep blue thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

TO A SKYLARK

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As when night is bare
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,

Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glowworm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds beflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;

TO A SKYLARK

I have never heard
  Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
  Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine, would be all
  But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
  Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
  What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of
    pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
  Languor cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
  Never came near thee;
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
  Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
  Than we mortals dream—

Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal
stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then—as I am listening
now.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

THE SONG OF DAVID

HE sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force
On which all strength depends:
From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world, the clustering spheres He made
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
Dale, champaign, grove and hill:
The multitudinous abyss,
Where secrecy remains in bliss,
And wisdom hides her skill.

Tell them *I AM,* Jehovah said
To Moses; while Earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once, above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, "O Lord, THOU ART."

CHRISTOPHER SMART

THE SHEPHERD BOY SINGS

Now as they were going along and talking, they espied a Boy feeding his Father's sheep. The Boy was in very mean Cloaths, but of a very fresh and well favored countenance, and as he sate by himself he sung. Hark, said Mr. Greatheart, to what the Shepherd's Boy saith. . . .

HE that is down need fear no Fall,
He that is low, no Pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or Much;
And, Lord, Contentment still I crave,
Because Thou savest Such.

Fullness to Such a Burden is
That go on Pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter Bliss
Is best from Age to Age.

JOHN BUNYAN

TRUE LOVE

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth 's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom:—
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

MARY'S GIRLHOOD

THIS is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
God's Virgin. Gone is great while, and she
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
Unto God's will she brought devout respect,
Profound simplicity of intellect,
And supreme patience. From her mother's knee
Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity;
Strong in grave peace; in pity circumspect.

So held she through her girlhood; as it were
An angel-watered lily, that near God
Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at home
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed;
Because the fulness of the time had come.

These are the symbols. On the cloth of red
I' the centre is the tripoint; perfect each,
Except the second of its points, to teach
That Christ is not yet born. The books—whose
head
Is golden Charity, as Paul hath said—

Those virtues are wherein the soul is rich;
Therefore on them the lily standeth, which
Is Innocence, being interpreted.
The seven-thorned brier and the palm seven-leaved
Are her great sorrow and her great reward.
Until the end be full, the Holy One
Abides without. She soon shall have achieved
Her perfect purity; yea, God the Lord
Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her Son.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

PART II

The Pipes of Pan

"When stars into the twilight steer,
Or thrushes build among the may,
Or wonder moves between the hills....."

John Drinkwater

AN APRIL MORNING

ONCE more in misted April
The world is growing green.
Along the winding river
The plumey willows lean.

Beyond the sweeping meadows
The looming mountains rise,
Like battlements of dreamland
Against the brooding skies.

In every wooded valley
The buds are breaking through,
As though the heart of all things
No languor ever knew.

The golden-wings and bluebirds
Call to their heavenly choirs.
The pines are blued and drifted
With smoke of brushwood fires.

And in my sister's garden
Where little breezes run,
The golden daffodillies
Are blowing in the sun.

BLISS CARMAN

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the evensong;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

ROBERT HERRICK

A CATCH FOR SPRING

NOW has the blue-eyed Spring
Sped dancing through the plain.
Girls weave a daisy chain;
Boys race beside the sedge;
Dust fills the blinding lane;
May lies upon the hedge;
All creatures love the Spring!

The clouds laugh on, and would
Dance with us if they could;
The larks ascend and shrill;
A woodpecker fills the wood;
Jays laugh crossing the hill;
All creatures love the Spring!

The lithe cloud-shadows chase
Over the whole earth's face,
And where winds ruffling veer
O'er wooded streams' dark ways
Mad fish unscudding steer;

All creatures love the Spring!

A CATCH FOR SPRING

Run, girls, to drink thick cream!
Race, boys, to where the stream
Winds through a rumbling pool,
And your bright bodies fling
Into the foaming cool!
For we'll enjoy our Spring!

ROBERT NICHOLS

SONG FROM "PIPPA PASSES"

THE year's at the Spring,
The day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled,
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world.

ROBERT BROWNING

SPRING SONG

I LOVE daffodils.
I love Narcissus when he bends his head.
I can hardly keep March and Spring and Sunday
and daffodils
Out of my rhyme of song.
Do you know anything about the spring
When it comes again?
God knows about it while winter is lasting.
Flowers bring him power in the spring,
And birds bring it, and children.
He is sometimes sad and alone
Up there in the sky trying to keep his worlds happy.
I bring him songs
When he is in his sadness and weary.
I tell him how I used to wander out
To study stars and the moon he made,
And flowers in the dark of the wood.
I keep reminding him about his flowers he has
forgotten,
And that snowdrops are up.
What can I say to make him listen?

SPRING SONG

"God," I say.
"Don't you care!
Nobody must be sad or sorry
In the spring-time of flowers."

HILDA CONKLING

DAFFODILS

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd—
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;
Ten thousand saw I, at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,

DAFFODILS

They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

OH, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

ROBERT BROWNING

A CHANTED CALENDAR

FIRST came the primrose,
On the bank high,
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So look'd she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind,
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has roll'd by
Wanders to and fro,
So totter'd she,
Dishevell'd in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May,
Like a banner'd show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way,

A CHANTED CALENDAR

With ten thousand flowers about them
they came trooping
Through the fields.
As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has roll'd away.
With dances and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the Fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she,
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

SYDNEY DOBELL

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

UNDER the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And love to lie i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

TEWKSBURY ROAD

IT is good to be out on the road, and going one
knows not where,
Going through meadow and village, one knows not
whither or why;
Through the grey light drift of the dust, in the
keen, cool rush of the air,
Under the flying white clouds, and the broad blue
lift of the sky.

And to halt at the chattering brook, in the tall
green fern at the brink,
Where the harebell grows, and the gorse, and the
foxgloves purple and white;
Where the shy-eyed delicate deer troop down to
the brook to drink,
Where the stars are mellow and large at the coming
of the night.

O, to feel the beat of the rain, and the homely
smell of the earth,
Is a tune for the blood to jig to, a joy past power
of words;

And the blessed green comely meadows are all a-ripple with mirth
At the noise of the lambs at play and the dear wild cry of the birds.

JOHN MASEFIELD

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

NOW the Four-way Lodge is opened, now the Hunting winds are loose—
Now the Smokes of Spring go up to clear the brain;
Now the Young Men's hearts are troubled for the whisper of the Trues,
Now the Red Gods make their medicine again!
Who hath seen the beaver busied? Who hath watched the black-tail mating?
Who hath lain alone to hear the wild-goose cry?
Who hath worked the chosen water where the ouananiche is waiting,
Or the sea-trout's jumping crazy for the fly?

He must go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world he's overdue.
'Send the road is clear before you when the old Spring fret comes o'er you,
And the Red Gods call for you!

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust;

And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull-moose
waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who
hath heard the birch-log burning?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young
Men's feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known delight.

Let him go—go, etc

Do you know the blackened timber—do you know
the racing stream
With the raw, right-angled log-jam at the end;
And the bar of sun-warmed shingle where a man
may bask and dream
To the click of shod canoe-poles round the bend?
It is there that we are going with our rods and
reels and races,
To a silent, smokey Indian that we know—
To a couch of new-pulled hemlock, with the star-
light on our faces,
For the Red Gods call us out and we must go!

They must go—go, etc.

Do you know the shallow Baltic where the seas
are steep and short,

Where the bluff lea-boarded fishing-luggers ride?
Do you know the joy of threshing leagues to lee-
ward of your port
On a coast you've lost the chart of overside?
It is there that I am going, with an extra hand to
bale her—
Just one able 'long-shore loafer that I know.
He can take his chance of drowning, while I sail
and sail and sail her,
For the Red Gods call me out, and I must go!

He must go—go, etc.

Do you know the pile-built village where the sago-
dealers trade—
Do you know the reek of fish and wet bamboo?
Do you know the steaming stillness of the orchid-
scented glade
When the blazoned, bird-winged butterflies flap
through?
It is there that I am going, with my camphor, net,
and boxes,
To a gentle, yellow pirate that I know—
To my little wailing lemurs, to my palms and
flying-foxes,
For the Red Gods call me out, and I must go.

He must go—go, etc.

Do you know the world's white roof-tree—do you
know that windy rift
Where the baffling mountain-eddies chop and
change?
Do you know the long day's patience, belly-down
on frozen drift,
While the head of heads is feeding out of range?
It is there that I am going, where the boulders
and the snow lie,
With a trusty, nimble tracker that I know.
I have sworn an oath, to keep it on the horns of
Ovis Poli,
And the Red Gods call me out and I must go.

He must go—go, etc.

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened—now the
Smokes of Council rise—
Pleasant smokes, ere yet 'twixt trail and trail they
choose—
Now the girths and ropes are tested; now they pack
their last supplies;
Now our Young Men go to dance before the
Trues!
Who shall meet them at those altars—who shall
light them to that shrine?
Velvet-footed, who shall guide them to their goal?

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

Unto each the voice and vision; unto each his spoor and sign—
Lonely mountain in the Northland, misty sweat-bath 'neath the Line
And to each a man that knows his naked soul!
White or yellow, black or copper, he is waiting as a lover,
Smoke of funnel, dust of hooves, or beat of train—
Where the high grass hides the horseman or the glaring flats discover—
Where the steamer hails the landing, or the surf-boats bring the rover—
Where the rails run out in sand-drift. . . .
Quick! ah, heave the camp-kit over,
For the Red Gods make their medicine again!

And we go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world we're overdue!
'Send the road is clear before you when the old
Spring-fret comes o'er you,
And the Red Gods call for you!

RUDYARD KIPLING

VISIONS

I NEVER watch the sun set a-down the Western skies
But that within its wonderness I see my mother's eyes;
I never hear the West wind sob softly in the trees
But that there comes her broken call far o'er the distant seas,
And never shine the dim stars but that my heart would go
Away and back to olden lands and dreams of long ago.

A rover of the wide world, when yet my heart was young,
The sea came whispering to me in well-beloved tongue,
And oh, the promises she held of golden lands a-gleam
That clung about my boy heart and filled mine eyes with dream,
And Wanderlust came luring me till 'neath the stars I swore
That I would be a wanderer for ever, ever more.

VISIONS

A rover of the wide world, I've seen the Northern lights
A-flashing countless colors in the knife-cold wintry nights;
I've watched the Southern Cross a-blaze o'er smiling, sunny lands,
And seen the lazy sea caress palm-sheltered, silver sands;
Still wild unrest is scourging me, the Wanderlust of yore,
And I must be a wanderer for ever, ever more.

And yet, I see the sun set a-down the Western skies,
And glimpse within the wonderness my mother's pleading eyes;
And yet, I hear the West wind sob softly in the trees
That vainly cloak her broken call far o'er the distant seas;
And still when shine the dim stars my wander-heart would go
Away and back to her side, and dreams of long ago.

EDMUND LEAMY

A VAGABOND SONG

THERE is something in the autumn that is
native to my blood
Touch of manner, hint of mood;
And my heart is like a rhyme,
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson
keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
Of bugles going by,
And my lonely spirit thrills
To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood
astir;
We must rise and follow her,
When from each hill of flame
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

BLISS CARMAN

LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES

LONG, long, long the trail
Through the brooding forest gloom,
Down the shadowy, lonely vale
Into silence, like a room
Where the light of life has fled,
And the jealous curtains close
Round the passionless repose
Of the silent dead.

Plod, plod, plod away
Step by step in smouldering moss;
Thick branches bar the day
Over languid streams that cross
Softly, slowly, with a sound
In their aimless creeping
Like a smothered weeping,
Through the enchanted ground.

"Yield, yield, yield thy quest,"
Whispers through the woodland deep;
"Come to me and be at rest;
I am slumber, I am sleep."

Then the weary feet would fail,
But the never-daunted will
Urges "Foward, foward still.
Press along the trail."

Breast, breast, breast the slope.
See, the path is growing steep.
Hark, a little song of hope
Where the stream begins to leap.
Though the forest, far and wide,
Still shuts out the blending blue,
We shall finally win through,
Cross the long divide.

On, on, onward tramp.
Will the journey never end?
Over yonder lies the camp;
Welcome waits us there, my friend.
Can we reach it ere the night?
Upward, upward, never fear.
Look, the summit must be near;
See the line of light.

Red, red, red the shine
Of the splendour in the west,
Glowing through the ranks of pine,
Clear along the mountain-crest.

LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES

Long, long, long the trail
Out of sorrow's lonely vale;
But at last the traveller sees
Light between the trees.

HENRY VAN DYKE

THE SEA GYPSY

I AM fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her top-sails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again tomorrow!
With the sunset I must be,
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the Sea.

RICHARD HOVEY

AT SEA

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lea.

O for a soft and gentle wind,
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners
The wind is piping loud;

AT SEA

The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

ALLEN CUNNINGHAM

SEA FEVER

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the
white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn
breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of
the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be de-
nied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds
flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the
sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant
gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the
wind's like a whetted knife;

And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long
trick's over.

JOHN MASEFIELD

HILLS

THE hills are going somewhere;
They have been on the way a long time.
They are like camels in a line
But they move more slowly.
Sometimes at sunset they carry silks,
But most of the time silver birch trees,
Heavy rocks, heavy trees, gold leaves
On heavy branches till they are aching. . . .
Birches like silver bars they can hardly lift
With grass so thick about their feet to hinder. . . .
They have not gone far
In the time I've watched them. . . .

HILDA CONKLING

AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

DEEP black against the dying glow
The tall elms stand; the rooks are still;
No windbreath makes the faintest thrill
Amongst the leaves; the fields below
Are vague and dim in twilight shades—
Only the bats wheel in their raids
On the grey flies, and silently
Great dusky moths go flitting by.

WILLIAM SHARP

MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot,—
The veriest school
Of Peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God? In gardens? When the
Eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine!

THOMAS E. BROWN

A LITTLE GARDEN

A LITTLE garden on a bleak hillside
Where deep the heavy, dazzling mountain snow
Lies far into the Spring. The sun's pale glow
Is scarcely able to make patches wide
About the single rosebush. All denied
Of Nature's tender ministries. But no,—
For wonder-working faith has made it blow
With flowers many hued and starry-eyed.
Here sleeps the sun long, idle summer hours;
Here butterflies and bees fare far to rove
Amid the crumpled leaves of poppy flowers;
Here four-o'clocks, to the passionate night above
Fling whiffs of perfume, like pale incense showers.
A little garden, loved with a great love!

AMY LOWELL

SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER

COME down at dawn from windless hills
Into the valley of the lake,
Where yet a larger quiet fills
The hour, and mist and water make
With rocks and reeds and island boughs
One silence and one element,
Where wonder goes surely as once
It went
By Galilean prows.

Moveless the water and the mist,
Moveless the secret air above,
Hushed, as upon some happy tryst
The poised expectancy of love;
What spirit is it that adores
What mighty presence yet unseen?
What consummation works apace
Between
These rapt enchanted shores?

Never did virgin beauty wake
Devouter to the bridal feast

SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER

Than moves this hour upon the lake
In adoration to the east;
Here is the bride a god may know,
The primal will, the young consent,
Till surely upon the appointed mood
Intent
    The god shall leap—and, Lo,

Over the lake's end strikes the sun,
White, flameless fire; some purity
Thrilling the mist, a splendour won
Out of the world's heart. Let there be
Thoughts, and atonements and desires,
Proud limbs, and undeliberate tongue,
Where now we move with mortal oars
Among
    Immortal dews and fires.

So the old mating goes apace,
Wind with the sea, and blood with thought,
Lover with lover; and the grace
Of understanding comes unsought
When stars into the twilight steer,
Or thrushes build among the may,
Or wonder moves between the hills,
And day
    Comes up on Rydal Mere.

JOHN DRINKWATER

LINES FROM "THE EVERLASTING MERCY"

BY this the sun was all one glitter,
The little birds were all in twitter;
Out of a tuft a little lark
Went higher up than I could mark,
His little throat was all one thirst
To sing until his heart should burst,
To sing aloft in golden light
His song from blue air out of sight.
The mist drove by, and now the cows
Came plodding up to milking house.
Followed by Frank, the Callow's cowman,
Who whistled, "Adam was a ploughman."
There came such cawing from the rooks,
Such running chuck from little brooks,
One thought it March, just budding green,
With hedgerows full of celandine.
An otter 'out of stream and played,
Two hares came loping up and stayed;
Wide-eyed and tender-eared, but bold.
Sheep bleated up by Penny's fold.
I heard a partridge covey call,

THE EVERLASTING MERCY

The morning sun was bright on all.
Down the long slope the plough-team drove.
The tossing rooks arose and hove.
A stone struck on the 'share. A word
Came to the team. The red earth stirred.

JOHN MASEFIELD

LINES FROM "SNOWBOUND"

UNWARMED by any sunset light
The grey day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirlwind of the blinding storm,
As zigzag, wavering to and fro,
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow.
And ere the early bed-time came
The white drift piled the window frame,
And through the dark the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on;
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,

LINES FROM "SNOWBOUND"

No clouds above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!

The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

PART III

Enchantment

"A song of enchantment I sang me there
In the green, green woods by waters fair,
Just as the words came up to me,
I sang them under the wild-wood tree."

Walter De La Mare

FAIRIES

I CANNOT see fairies.
I dream them.
There is no fairy can hide from me;
I keep on dreaming till I find him;
There you are, Primrose!
I see you, Black Wing!

HILDA CONKLING

FAIRY LAND

OVER hill, over dale,
Through bush, through brier,
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green;
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours;
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WILL EVER?

WILL he ever be weary of wandering,
The flaming sun?
Ever weary of waning in lovelight,
The white, still moon?
Will ever a shepherd come
With a crook of simple gold,
And lead all the little stars
Like lambs to the fold?

Will ever the Wanderer sail
From over the sea,
Up the river of water,
To the stones to me?
Will he take us all into his ship,
Dreaming, and waft us far,
To where in the clouds of the West
The Islands are?

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE OTHERS

FROM our hidden places
By a secret path,
We troop in the moonlight
To the edge of the green wrath.

There the night through
We take our pleasure,
Dancing to such a measure
As earth never knew.

To song and dance
And lilt without a name
So sweetly breathed
'Twould put a bird to shame.

And many a young maiden
Is there of mortal birth
Her young eyes laden
With dreams of earth.

And many a youth entrancéd
Moves slowly in the wildered round,

His brave lost feet enchanted
In the rhythm of elfin sound.

Music so forest wild
And piercing sweet would bring
Silence on blackbirds singing
Their best in the ear of Spring.

And now they pause in their dancing
And look with troubled eyes,
Earth's straying children
With sudden memory wise.

They pause, and their eyes in the moonlight
With faery wisdom cold,
Grow dim, and a thought goes fluttering
In hearts no longer old.

And then the dream forsakes them,
And singing they turn anew
As the whispering music takes them
To the dance of the elfin crew.

Oh, many a thrush and blackbird
Would fall to the dewy ground
And pine away in silence
For envy of such a sound.

So the night through
In our sad pleasure
We dance to many a measure
That earth never knew.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

FAERIES' SONG

THE wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the fairies dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolany say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured and
sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away."

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

ECHO

HOW see you Echo? When she calls I see
Her pale face looking down through some great tree,
Whose world of green is like a moving sea,
That shells re-echo.
I see her with a white face like a mask,
That vanished to come again; damask
Her cheek, but deeply pale,
Her eyes are green,
With a silver sheen,
And she mocks the thing you ask.

"O Echo!" (hear the children calling) "are you there?"
"Where?". . . .

When the wind blows over the hill,
She hides with a vagrant will,
And call you may loud, and call you may long,
She lays finger on lip when the winds are strong,
And for all your pains she is still.
But when young plants spring, and the chiff-chaffs sing,

And the scarlet capped woodpecker flies through the
vale,
She is out all day,
Through the fragrant May,
To babble and tattle her Yea and Nay.

"O Echo!" (still the children call) "where are you?
where?"

"Air". . . .

PAMELA TENNANT

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granery is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets, too, and fragrant zone;

She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing,
A fairy's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
"I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—ah, woe betide.
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death pale were they all;
They cried—"La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall."

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapéd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing.

JOHN KEATS

SONG

A FAIRY band are we
In fairy-land;
Singing march we, hand in hand;
Singing, singing all day long;
(Some folk never heard a fairy song).

Singing, singing,
When the merry thrush is swinging
On a springing spray;
Or when the witch that lives in gloomy caves
And creeps by night among the graves
Calls a cloud across the day;
Cease we never our fairy song,
March we ever along, along,
Down the dale, or up the hill,
Singing, singing still.

ALFRED NOYES

THE FAIRIES

UP the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and grey
He's nigh lost his wits.

With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses.
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,

He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

KILMENY

BONNY Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring,—
The scarlet hypp, and the hindberrye,
And the nut that hung frae the hazel-tree;
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
And lang may she seek i' the greenwood shaw;
Lang the laird of Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame.

When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedesman had prayed, and the dead-bell rung;
Late, late in a gloamin', when all was still,
When the the fringe was red on the westlin' hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,

The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,—
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
When the ingle glowed with an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Long hae we sought baith holt and den—
By linn, by ford, and greenwood tree;
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
Where got you that joup o' the lily sheen?
That bonny snood of the birk sae green?
And these roses, the fairest that ever were seen?
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?"

Kilmeny, looked up with a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew;
But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been—

A land of love and a land of light,
Withouten sun, or moon, or night;
And lovely beings round were rife,
Who erst had travelled mortal life;
They clasped her waist and her hands sae fair,
They kissed her cheek and they kemed her hair;
And round came many a blooming fere,
Saying, "Bonny Kilmeny, ye're welcome here!
Oh, Bonny Kilmeny, free frae stain,
If ever you seek the world again—
That world of sin, of sorrow and fear—
O, tell of the joys that are waiting here!
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see,
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall
be."

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
And she waked in the light of a sunless day;
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light;
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
That her youth and beauty might never fade;
And they smiled on heaven, when they saw her lie
In the stream of life that wandered by.
They bore her away, she wist not how,
For she felt not arm nor rest below;

But so swift they wained her through the light,
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;
They seemed to split the gales of air,
And yet not gale nor breeze was there.
They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal had never seen;
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,
And note the changes the spirits wrought;
For now she lived in the land of thought.
She looked, and she saw not sun nor skies,
But a chrystal dome of a thousand dyes;
She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light;
And radiant beings went and came,
Far swifter than wind or the linkéd flame;
She hid her e'en frae the dazzling view;
She looked again and the scene was new.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing Nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of men were by,
And all was love and harmony;
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like the flakes of snaw on a winter's day.
Then Kilmeny begged again to see

KILMENY

The friends she had left in her own countrye;
With distant music soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep;
And when she wakened, she lay her lane,
All happed with flowers in the greenwood wene.
When seven long years had come and fled;
When grief was calm, and hope was dead;
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in the gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!
And oh, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her e'e!
And oh, the words that fell from her mouth
Were words of wonder and words of truth!

It wasna her home, and she couldna remain;
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And returned to the land of thought again.

JAMES HOGG

THE FAIRIES HAVE NEVER A PENNY TO SPEND

THE fairies have never a penny to spend
They haven't a thing put by,
But theirs is the dower of bird and flower
And theirs are the earth and sky.
And though you should live in a palace of gold
Or sleep in a dried-up ditch,
You could never be poor as the fairies are,
And never as rich.

Since ever and ever the world began
They have danced like a ribbon of flame,
They have sung their song through the centuries long
And yet it is never the same.
And though you be foolish or though you be wise,
With hair of silver or gold,
You can never be young as the fairies are,
And never as old.

ROSE FYLEMAN

FAIRY BREAD

COME up here, O dusty feet!
Here is fairy bread to eat.
Here in my retiring room,
Children, you may dine
On the golden smell of broom
And the shade of pine;
And when you have eaten well,
Fairy stories hear and tell.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THE HORNS OF ELFLAND

THE splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying!

O hark! O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying!

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying!

ALFRED TENNYSON

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river?

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river.
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river,
And hacked and hewed as a great god can
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

He cut it short did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river)
Then drew the pith like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
Then notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes as he sate by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan,
(Laughed as he sate by the river)
"The only way since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed,"
Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan,
Piercing sweet by the river.
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan.
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan
To laugh, as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man.
The true gods sigh for the cost and the pain—
For the reed that grows never more again
As a reed with the reeds of the river.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

TREE-TOAD

TREE–TOAD is a small gray person
With a silver voice.
Tree-toad is a leaf-gray shadow
That sings.
Tree-toad is never seen
Unless a star squeezes through the leaves,
Or a moth looks sharply at a gray branch.
How would it be, I wonder.
To sing patiently all night,
Never thinking that people are asleep?
Raindrops and mist, starriness over the trees,
The moon, the dew, the other little singers,
Cricket . . . toad . . . leaf rustling . . .
They would listen;
It would be music like weather
That gets into all the corners
Of out-of-doors.
Every night I see little shadows
I never saw before.
Every night I hear little voices
I never heard before.

TREE-TOAD

When night comes trailing her starry cloak,
I start out for slumberland,
With tree-toads calling along the roadside.
Goodnight, I say to one, *goodby*, I say to another;
I hope to find you on the way
We have travelled before!
I hope to hear you singing on the road of dreams!

HILDA CONKLING

THE MOCKING FAIRY

WON'T you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, nidding, nodding in the garden;
"Can't you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, laughing softly in the garden;
But the air was still, the cherry boughs were still,
And the ivy-tod 'neath the empty sill,
And never from her window looked out Mrs. Gill
On the Fairy shrilling mocking in the garden.

"What have they done with you, you poor Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, brightly glancing in the garden;
"Where have they hidden you, you poor old Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy dancing lightly in the garden;
But night's faint veil now wrapped the hill,
Stark 'neath the stars stood the dead-still Mill,
And out of her cold cottage never answered Mrs. Gill
The Fairy mimbling mambling in the garden.

WALTER DE LA MARE

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June;
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears their natural song—
In-doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

LEIGH HUNT

THE FIELD MOUSE

WHEN the moon shines o'er the corn
And the beetle drones his horn,
And the flittermice swift fly,
And the nightjars swooping cry,
And the young hares run and leap,
We waken from our sleep.

And we climb with tiny feet
And we munch the green corn sweet
With startled eyes for fear
The white owl should fly near,
Or long slim weasel spring
Upon us where we swing.

We do no hurt at all;
Is there not room for all
Within the happy world?
All day we lie close curled
In drowsy sleep, nor rise
Till through the dusky skies
The moon shines o'er the corn
And the beetle drones his horn.

WILLIAM SHARP

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go,
Call once yet.
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain.
Surely she will come again.
Call her once, and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay.

The wild white horses foam and fret."
"Margaret! Margaret!"

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more.
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore;
Then come down.
She will not come, though you call all day;
Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.

She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said, "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore today.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, merman, here with thee."
I said, "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
"Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say.
Come," I said; and we rose through the surf in the bay.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled
town;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was
still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.

From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with
rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear;
"Margaret, hist! Come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah! She gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book.
Loud prays the priest, shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down.
Down to the depths of the sea.
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.

Hark what she sings; "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy,
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessèd light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,

Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing, "Here came a mortal
But faithless was she.
And alone dwell forever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze; from the sand-hills,
At the white sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side,
And then come back down,

Singing, "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she.
She left lonely forever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD

IV

Stories

". . . . Cometh unto you with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner."

Sir Philip Sidney

MARTHA

ONCE . . . once upon a time . . ."
Over and over again,
Martha would tell us her stories,
In the hazel glen.

Hers were those clear grey eyes
You watch, and the story seems
Told by their beautifulness
Tranquil as dreams.

She would sit with her two slim hands
Clasped round her bended knees;
While we on our elbows lolled,
And stared at ease.

Her voice and her narrow chin,
Her grave small lovely head,
Seemed half the meaning
Of the words she said.

MARTHA

"Once . . . once upon a time. . . ."
Like a dream you dream in the night,
Fairies and gnomes stole out
In the leaf-green light.

And her beauty far away
Would fade, as her voice ran on,
Till hazel and summer sun
And all were gone;—

All fordone and forgot;
And like clouds in the height of the sky,
Our hearts stood still in the hush
Of an age gone by.

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S JEST

WHEN spring-time flushes the desert grass,
Our kafilas wind through the Khyber Pass.
Lean are the camels but fat the frails,
Light are the purses but heavy the bales,
As the snowbound trade of the North comes down
To the market-square of Peshawur town.

In a turquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A kafila camped at the foot of the hill.
Then blue smoke-haze of the cooking rose,
And tent-peg answered to hammer-nose;
And the picketed ponies, shag and wild,
Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road;
And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale;
And the tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food;
And the camp-fires twinkled by Fort Jumrood;
And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk
A savour of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,

To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.
The lid of the flesh-pot chattered high,
The knives were whetted and—then came I
To Mahbub Ali, the muleteer,
Patching his bridles and counting his gear,
Crammed with the gossip of half a year.
But Mahbub Ali the kindly said,
"Better is speech when belly is fed."
So we plunged the hand to the mid-wrist deep
In a cinnamon stew of the fat-tailed sheep,
And he who never hath tasted the food,
By Allah! he knoweth not bad from good.

We cleansed our beards of the mutton-grease,
We lay on the mats and were filled with peace,
And the talk slid north, and the talk slid south,
With the sliding puffs from the hookah-mouth.

Four things greater than all things are,—
Women and Horses and Power and War.
We spake of them all, but the last the most.
For I sought a word of a Russian post,
Of a shifty promise, an unsheathed sword
And a grey-coat guard on the Helmund ford.

Then Mahbub Ali lowered his eyes
In the fashion of one who is weaving lies.

Quoth he; "Of the Russians who can say?
When the night is gathering all is grey.
But we look that the gloom of the night shall die
In the morning flush of a blood-red sky.
Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of a King.
That unsought counsel is cursed of God
Attesteth the story of Wali Dad.

"His sire was leaky of tongue and pen,
His dam was a clucking Khuttuck hen;
And the colt bred close to the vice of each,
For he carried the curse of an unstanched speech.
Therewith madness—so that he sought
The favor of kings at the Kabul court;
And travelled, in hope of honour, far
To the line where the grey-coat squadrons are.
There have I journeyed too—but I
Saw naught, said naught, and—did not die!
He harkened to rumor, and snatched at a breath
Of 'this one knoweth' and 'that one saith,'—
Legends that ran from mouth to mouth
Of a grey-coat coming, and sack of the South.
These have I also heard—they pass
With each new spring and the winter grass.

"Hot-foot southward, forgotten of God,
Back to the city ran Wali Dad,
Even to Kabul—in full durbar
The King held talk with his Chief in War.
Into the press of the crowd he broke,
And what he had heard of the coming spoke.
Then Gholam Hyder, the Red Chief, smiled,
As a mother might on a babbling child;
But those who would laugh restrained their breath,
When the face of the King showed dark as death.
Evil it is in full durbar
To cry to a ruler of gathering War!
Slowly he led to a peach-tree small,
That grew by a cleft of the city wall.
And he said to the boy; 'They shall praise thy zeal
So long as the red spurt follows the steel.
And the Russ is upon us even now?
Great is thy prudence—wait them, thou.
Watch from the tree. Thou art young and strong.
Surely the vigil is not for long.
The Russ is upon us, thy clamour ran?
Surely an hour shall bring their van.
Wait and watch. When the host is near
Shout aloud that my men may hear.'

"Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?

A guard was set that he might not flee—
A score of bayonets ringed the tree.
The peach-bloom fell in showers of snow,
When he shook at his death as he looked below.
By the power of God, who alone is great,
Till the seventh day he fought with his fate.
Then madness took him, and men declare
That he mowed in the branches as ape and bear,
And last as a sloth, ere his body failed,
And he hung like a bat in the forks, and wailed,
And sleep the cords of his hands untied,
And he fell, and was caught on the points—and died.

"Heart of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
Of the grey-coat coming who can say?
When the night is gathering all is grey.
Two things greater than all things are,
The first is Love, and the second War.
And since we know not how War may prove,
Heart of my heart, let us talk of Love!"

RUDYARD KIPLING

FORTY SINGING SEAMEN

I

ACROSS the seas of Wonderland to Mogadore we plodded,
Forty singing seamen in an old black barque,
And we landed in the twilight where a Polyphemus nodded,
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow through the dark!
For his eye was growing mellow,
Rich and ripe and red and yellow,
As was time, since old Ulysses made him bellow in the dark!
Since Ulysses bunged his eye up with a pine-torch in the dark!

II

Were they mountains in the gloaming or the giant's ugly shoulders
Just beneath the rolling eye-ball, with its bleared and vinous glow,
Red and yellow o'er the purple of the pines among the boulders

And the shaggy horror brooding on the sullen slopes
below,
Were they pines among the boulders
Or the hair upon his shoulders?
We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't
know.
We were simple singing seamen, so of course we
couldn't know.

III

But we crossed a plain of poppies, and we came upon
a fountain
Not of water, but of jewels, like a spray of leaping
fire;
And behind it, in an emerald glade, beneath a golden
mountain
There stood a crystal palace, for a sailor to admire;
For a troop of ghosts came round us,
Which with leaves of bay they crowned us,
Then with grog they well-nigh drowned us, to the
depth of our desire!
And 'twas very friendly of them, as a sailor can
admire!

IV

There was music all about us, we were growing quite
forgetful

We were only singing seamen from the dirt of London town,
Though the nectar that we swallowed seemed to vanish half regretful
As if we wasn't good enough to take such vittles down,
When we saw a sudden figure,
Tall and black as any nigger,
Like the devil—only bigger—drawing near us with a frown!
Like the devil—but much bigger—and he wore a golden crown!

V

And "What's all this?" he growls at us! With dignity we chaunted,
"Forty singing seamen, sir, as won't be put upon!"
"What? Englishmen?" he cries, "Well, if ye don't mind being haunted,
Faith, you're welcome to my palace; I'm the famous Prester John!
Will ye walk into my palace?
I don't bear 'ee any malice!
One and all ye shall be welcome in the halls of Prester John!"
So we walked into the palace and the halls of Prester John!

VI

Now the door was one great diamond and the hall a
hollow ruby—
Big as Beachy Head, my lads, nay bigger by a half!
And I sees the mate wi' mouth agape, a-staring
like a booby,
And the skipper close behind him, with his tongue
out like a calf!
Now the way to take it rightly
Was to walk along politely
Just as if you didn't notice—so I couldn't help but
laugh!
For they both forgot their manners and the crew
was bound to laugh!

VII

But he took us through his palace, and, my lads, as
I'm a sinner,
We walked into an opal like a sunset colored cloud—
"My dining room," he says, and, quick as light, we
saw a dinner
Spread before us by the fingers of a hidden fairy
crowd;
And the skipper, swaying gently
After dinner, murmurs faintly,
"I looks to-wards you, Prester John, you've done
us very proud!"

And he drank his health with honors, for he *done* us *very* proud!

VIII

Then he walks us to his gardens where we sees a feathered demon
Very splendid and important on a sort of spicy tree!
"That's the Pheonix," whispers Prester, "which all eddicated seamen
Knows the only one existent, and *he's* waiting for to flee!
When his hundred years expire
Then he'll set hisself a-fire
And another from his ashes rise most beautiful to see!"
With wings of rose and emerald most beautiful to see!

IX

Then he says, "In yonder forest there's a little silver river
And whosoever drinks of it, his youth will never die!
The centuries go by, but Prester John endures for ever
With his music in the mountains and his magic on the sky!

While *your* hearts are growing colder,
While your world is growing older,
There's a magic in the distance, where the sea-line meets the sky."
It shall call to singing seamen till the fount o' song is dry!

X

So we thought we'd up and seek it, but that forest fair defied us,—
First a crimson leopard laughed at us most horrible to see,
Then a sea-green lion came and sniffed and licked his chops and eyed us,
While a red and yellow unicorn was dancing round a tree!
We was trying to look thinner,
Which was hard, because our dinner
Must ha' made us very tempting to a cat o' high degree!
Must ha' made us very tempting to the whole menarjeree!

XI

So we scuttled from that forest and across the poppy meadows
Where the awful shaggy horror brooded o'er us in the dark!

And we pushes out from shore again a-jumping at
our shadows
And pulls away most joyful to the old black barque!
And home again we plodded
While the Polyphemus nodded
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow
through the dark.
Oh, the moon above the mountains red and yellow
through the dark!

XII

Across the seas of Wonderland to London town we
blundered,
Forty singing seamen as was puzzled for to know
If the visions that we saw was caused by—here
again we pondered—
A tipple in a vision forty thousand years ago.
Could the grog we *dreamt* we swallowed
Make us *dream* of all that followed?
We were simply singing seamen, so of course we
didn't know!
We were simply singing seamen, so of course we
could not know!

ALFRED NOYES

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
The hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,

Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing; the autumn fall of leaves
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met,
'Mid deathless Love's acclaims
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;

Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah, sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.

"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As into a stream we will step down
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayers sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living, mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that his plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice

Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the grove
Where the Lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks,
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb;
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,

Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged, unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
This much for him and me;—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along

The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

PART I

IT is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three,
"By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set;
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropped he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three-years' child;
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone;
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;

And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong;
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who, pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold;
And ice, mast high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy cliffs
Did send a dismal sheen;
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around;

It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross;
Through the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew,
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends that plague thee thus!—
Why looks't thou so?" "With my crossbow
I shot the Albatross!"

PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe;
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah, wretch, said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist;
Then all averred, I had killed the bird,
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;

We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea.

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
And not a drop to drink.

The very deep did rot; O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green and blue and white.

And some in dreams assuréd were
Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist
And still it neared and neared;
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could not laugh nor wail;
Through utter doubt all dumb we stood,
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! A sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call;
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

See! See! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all aflame,
The day was well-nigh done!

Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange ship drove suddenly,
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered,
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud,)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres!

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold;
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;

"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump.
They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

PART IV

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee, and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown—"
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropped not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful
And they all dead did lie;
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rolling sea
And drew my eyes away;

I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they;
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to Hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide;

Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay
The charméd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire;
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare;
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware!
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I woke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs;
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blesséd ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind;
It did not come anear;
But with its sounds it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick, black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;

Yet never a breeze upblew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee!
The body and I pulled at one rope.
But he said naught to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest;

For when it dawned, they dropt their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;

Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe;
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean;
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound;
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other voice was a softer voice,
As soft as honey dew;
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice.

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice.

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim;
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First voice.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second voice.

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated,
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather;
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a carnel-dungeon fitter;
All fixed on me their stony eyes
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away;
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapped; once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen.

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made;
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek,
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly, too;
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? Is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—

O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock;
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson colors were;
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band each waved his hand;
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot, and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast;
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice;
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

This Hermit good lives in the wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners.
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve,—
He hath a cushion plump;
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff boat neared; I heard them talk
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair
That signal made but now?'

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;

When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I spake not nor stirred;
The boat come close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread;
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;

And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars; the Pilot's boy
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! Ha!' quoth he 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.
'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick!' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told
This heart within me burns.
I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange powers of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me;
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding guests are there;
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are;
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea;
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage feast
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,

While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone; and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn;
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

ON either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs forever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four grey walls, and four grey towers,
Overlook a space of flowers
And the silent isle embowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd

By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot;
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land?
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot;
And by the moon the reapers weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whisper, "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,

And little other care has she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot.
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two;
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the magic mirror's sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot;

Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers, lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight forever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot.
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jeweled shone the saddle leather,

The helmet and the helmet feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me!" cried
The Lady of Shalott.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seër in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot;

And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
  The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
  The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharves they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
  The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near

Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot;
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace;
The Lady of Shalott."

ALFRED TENNYSON

THE LEGEND OF THE TORTOISE

THERE was a day, so country legends tell,
When Blessed Mary gave in Heaven a feast.
And to her board, she, loving all things well,
Invited insect, reptile, bird and beast.
To the white walls of Heaven she bid them come
To keep high festival in her great home.

And first the lion of the tawny mane,
Came with a reverence in his golden eyes,
And all the forest beasts, to Heaven's domain,
Making obeisance to its sanctities.
The subtle elephant, the sinuous ape,
The clarion peacock of the beak agape.

The silver fishes, and the myriad flies,
The beetle of the shard-back like a shield,
The spider, with her web's intricacies,
The little mice of cupboard, church and field,
The dappled deer upon a thousand hills,
The bird that on the quick snake stamps, and kills.

The crested lark, that pilgrim of the sky,
The yaffle, and the curlew, and the kite,

The nightingale, whose hidden rhapsody,
Enchants and holds the listening ear of night,
The babbling cuckoo of the double tongue,
The lapwing that deceives to shield her young.

There came the squirrel, and the watchman owl,
The whistling marmot, and the two-toed sloth.
The lean hyæna, and the grey sea-fowl,
The golden butterfly, and the silver moth
(Who vowed in Heaven she would do no wrong)
All these and more 'gan Heavenwards to throng.

When they were all assembled at the feast
The Virgin looked around her in the hall,
Saying, "I bid ye come from great to least,
Hath not the whole creation heard my call?
God's birds and beasts have hastened to appear,
Only the shell-backed tortoise is not here."

Answered the eagle, "As I clove the sky,
Hitherward flying at thy mild behest,
Upon the earth I cast my burning eye,
And saw the tortoise on his tardy quest,
Painfully mastering the stubborn soil—
Cursing his heavy back in tedious toil.

'Lift me, O thou that gazeth on the sun!'
He cried, 'And hear me for the love of God!

I that must creep, nay, I that fain would run,
I, a poor earthbound creature of the sod,
Must be too late, or never be at all
At Mary's feast in the Celestial Hall.'

Then I, because of birds I am the chief,
Stooped in mine aërial path and lifted him.
Yet not, forsooth, so much for his relief
As that it pleased me to fulfill a whim.
But he so vexed me with his ugly sprawl
That wearied of his weight, I let him fall."

Then Mary, of the seven times wounded heart,
Was filled with sorrow at his careless tale.
She chid the eagle for his cruel part
And bid him seek the tortoise in the vale.
Then piece to piece she joined the broken shell,
And with her healing hands, she made him well.

Mark how the tortoise now, with patterned back
Bears horny testimony of his fall!
Yet, strong and strenuous if on tardy track
Had he persevered, he had saved it all.
Since who wins Heaven must strive for it, nor ask.
Now God be with us in the blesséd task.

PAMELA TENNANT

THE FECKENHAM MEN

THE jolly men at Feckenham
Don't count their goods as common men,
Their heads are full of silly dreams
From half-past ten to half-past ten,
They'll tell you why the stars are bright,
And some sheep black and some sheep white.

The jolly men at Feckenham
Draw wages of the sun and rain,
And count as good as golden coin
The blossoms on the window-pane,
And Lord! they love a sinewy tale
Told over pots of foaming ale!

Now here's a tale of Feckenham
Told to me by a Feckenham man,
Who, being only eighty years,
Ran always when the red fox ran,
And looked upon the earth with eyes
As quiet as unclouded skies.

These jolly men of Feckenham
One day when summer strode in power

THE FECKENHAM MEN

Went down, it seems, among their lands
And saw their bean fields all in flower—
"Wheat ricks," they said, "be good to see;
What would a rick of blossoms be?"

So straight they brought the sickles out
And worked all day till day was done,
And builded them a good square rick
Of scented bloom beneath the sun.
And was not this I tell to you
A fiery-hearted thing to do?

JOHN DRINKWATER

THE THREE CHERRY TREES

THERE were three cherry trees once,
Grew in a garden all shady;
And there for delight of so gladsome a sight,
Walked a most beautiful lady,
Dreamed a most beautiful lady.

Birds in those branches did sing,
Blackbirds and throstle and linnet,
But she walking there was by far the most fair—
Lovelier than all else within it,
Blackbird and throstle and linnet.

But blossoms to berries do come,
All hanging on stalks light and slender,
And one long summer's day charmed that lady
away,
With vows sweet and merry and tender,
A lover with voice low and tender.

Moss and lichen the green branches deck;
Weeds nod in its paths green and shady;

Yet a light footstep seems there to wander in
dreams,
The ghost of that beautiful lady,
That happy and beautiful lady.

WALTER DE LA MARE

KALLUNBORG CHURCH

BUILD at Kallunborg by the sea
A church as stately as church may be,
And there shalt thou wed my daughter fair,"
Said the Earl of Nesvek to Esbern Snare.
And the Baron laughed. But Esbern said,
"Though I lose my soul, I will Helva wed!"
And off he strode, in his pride of will,
To the Troll who dwelt in Ulshoi Hill.
"Build, oh, Troll, a church for me
At Kallunborg by the mighty sea;
Build it stately and build it fair,
Build it quickly," said Esbern Snare.
But the sly dwarf said, "No work is wrought
By Trolls of the Hills, O man, for naught.
What wilt thou give for thy church so fair?"
"Set thy own price!" quoth Esbern Snare.
"When Kallunborg Church is builded well
Thou must the name of the builder tell,
Or thy heart and thy eyes must be my boon."
"Build," said Esbern, "And build it soon."

By night and by day the Troll wrought on;
He hewed the timber, he piled the stone;

But day by day, as the walls rose fair,
Darker and sadder grew Esbern Snare.
He listened by night, he watched by day,
He sought and thought, but he dared not pray;
In vain he called on the Elle-maids shy,
And the Neck and the Nis gave no reply.
Of his evil bargain far and wide
A rumor ran through the country-side;
And Helva of Nesvek, young and fair,
Prayed for the soul of Esbern Snare.
And now the church was well-nigh done;
One pillar it lacked, and one alone;
And the grim Troll muttered "Fool that thou art.
Tomorrow gives me thy eyes and heart."
By Kallunborg in black despair,
Through wood and meadow, walked Esbern Snare,
Till, worn and weary, the strong man sank
Under the birches on Ulshoi bank.
At his last days' work he heard the Troll
Hammer and delve in the quarry's hole;
Before him the church stood, large and fair;
"I have builded my tomb!" said Esbern Snare.
And he closed his eyes the sight to hide,
When he heard a light step by his side;
"O Esbern Snare," a sweet voice said,
"Would I might die now in thy stead."
With a grasp by love and by fear made strong,

He held her fast, and he held her long;
With the beating heart of a bird afeard
She hid her face in his flame red beard.
"O love!" he cried, "let me look today
In thine eyes ere mine are plucked away;
Let me hold thee close, let me feel thy heart
Ere mine by the Troll is torn apart.
I sinned, O Helva, for love of thee.
Pray that the Lord Christ pardon me!"

But fast as she prayed, and faster still,
Hammered the Troll in Ulshoi Hill.
He knew, as he wrought, that a loving heart
Was somehow baffling his evil art;
For more than spell of elf or Troll
Is a maiden's prayer for her lover's soul.
And Esbern listened, and caught the sound
Of a troll-wife singing underground;
"Tomorrow comes Fine, father thine,
Lie still, and hush thee, baby mine.
Lie still, my darling. Next sunrise
Thou'lt play with Esbern Snare's heart and eyes!"
"Ho! Ho!" quoth Esbern, "is that your game?
Thanks to the Troll-wife, I know his name!"
The Troll he heard him, and hurried on
To Kallunborg church with the lacking stone.
"Too late, Gaffer Fine!" cried Esbern Snare;
And Troll and pillar vanished in air.

KALLUNBORG CHURCH

That night the harvesters heard the sound
Of a woman sobbing underground,
And the voice of the Hill-Troll, loud with blame
Of the careless singer who told his name.
Of the Troll of the Church they sing the tune
By the Northern sea in the harvest moon;
And the fishers of Zealand hear him still
Scolding his wife in Ulshoi Hill.
And seaward over its groves of birch
Still looks the tower of Kallunborg church,
Where, first at its altar, a wedded pair,
Stood Helva of Nesvek and Esbern Snare.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

THE YARN OF THE *NANCY BELL*

'TWAS on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key;

"Oh, I am a cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been
drinking,
And so I simply said;

"Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,

But I'll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn;

" 'Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian sea,
And there on a reef we came to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all o' the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the *Nancy's* men
Said 'Here' to the muster roll.

"There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungary we did feel,
So we drawed a lot, and accordin' shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question 'which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says Tom,
'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be!'

'I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I,
And 'Exactly so!' quoth he.

"Says he, 'Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook me,
While I can—and will—cook you?'

"So he boils the water and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped
shalot,
And some sage and parsley, too.

" 'Come here,' says he, with proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
' 'Twill soothing be if I let you see,
How extremely nice you'll smell.'

"And he stirred it round and round and round
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his
squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be

The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a vessel in sight I see.

"And I never grieve, and I never smile,
And I never larf nor play
But I sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say;

"Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

WILLIAM S. GILBERT

SAUL

I

SAID Abner. "At last thou art come. Ere I tell, ere thou speak,
Kiss my cheek, wish me well." Then I wished it, and did kiss his cheek,
And he, "Since the King, O my friend, for thy countenance sent,
Neither drunken nor eaten have we; nor until from his tent
Thou return with the joyful assurance the King liveth yet,
Shall our lips with the honey be bright, with the water be wet.
For out of the black mid-tent's silence, a space of three days,
Not a sound hath escaped to thy servants, of prayer nor of praise,
To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have ended their strife,
And that, faint in his triumph, the monarch sinks back upon life.

II

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved, God's child with his dew
On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies still living and blue
Just broken to twine round thy harp strings, as if no wild heat
Were now raging to torture the desert."

III

Then I, as was meet,
Knelt down to the God of my fathers, and rose to my feet,
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder. The tent was unlooped;
I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and under I stooped;
Hands and knees on the slippery grass-patch, all withered and gone,
That extends to the second enclosure, I groped my way on
Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open. Then once more I prayed,
And opened the foldskirts and entered, and was not afraid

But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant." And no
voice replied.
At the first I saw naught but the blackness; but soon
I descried
A something more black than the blackness—the
vast, the upright
Main prop which sustains the pavilion; and slow into
sight
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of
all.
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the tent-roof,
showed Saul.

IV

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms
stretched out wide
On the great cross-support in the centre, that goes
to each side.
He relaxed not a muscle but hung there as, caught
in his pangs
And waiting his change, the king-serpent all heavily
hangs,
Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliverance
come
With the spring-time, so agonized Saul, drear and
stark, blind and dumb.

V

Then I tuned my harp, took off the lilies we twine
round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noon-tide—
those sunbeams like swords.
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as,
one after one,
So docile they come to the pen door till folding be
done.
They are white and untorn by the bushes, for, lo,
they have fed
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the
stream's bed;
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star
follows star
Into eve and the blue far above us, so blue and so
far.

VI

Then the tune for which quails on the cornland will
each leave his mate
To fly after the player; then, what makes the
crickets elate
Till for boldness they fight one another; and then,
what has weight
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand-
house—

There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird
and half mouse.
God made all the creatures and gave them our love
and our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one
family here.

VII

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their
wine-song, when hand
Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship,
and great hearts expand
And grow one in the sense of this world's life. And
then, the last song
When the dead man is praised on his journey, "Bear,
bear him along,
With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets.
Are balmseeds not here
To console us? The land has none left such as
he on the bier.
Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!" And
then, the glad chaunt
Of the marriage, first go the young maidens, next,
she whom we vaunt
As the beauty, the pride, of our dwelling. And
then, the great march

Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress
an arch
Naught can break; who shall harm them, our
friends? Then, the chorus intoned
As the Levites go up to the altar in glory en-
throned.
But I stopped here; for here in the darkness Saul
groaned.

VIII

And I paused, held my breath, in such silence, and
listened apart
And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered; and
sparkles 'gan dart
From the jewels that woke in his turban, at once
with a start,
All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous
at heart.
So the head; but the body still moved not, still hung
there erect.
And I bent once again to my playing, pursued it un-
checked,
As I sang;—

IX

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor! No
spirit feels waste,

Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced.
Oh, the wild joys of living! The leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir tree. The cool, silver shock
Of the plunge in the pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust divine,
And the locust flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught of wine,
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well.
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious reward?
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung

The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint tongue
Joining in while it could to the witness, 'Let one more attest
I have lived, seen God's hand through a lifetime, and all was for best?'
Then they sung through their tears in strong triumph, not much but the rest.
And thy brothers, the help and the contest, the working whence grew
Such results, as from seething grape-bundles, the spirit strained true;
And the friends of thy boyhood, that boyhood of wonder and hope
Present promise, and wealth of the future beyond the eye's scope,
Till, lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a people is thine;
And all gifts which the world offers singly, on one head combine!
On one head, all the beauty and strength, love and rage (like the throe
That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor, and lets the gold go)
High ambition and deeds which surpass it, fame crowning them,—all
Brought to blaze on the head of one creature—King Saul!"

And, lo, with that leap of my spirit,—heart, hand, harp and voice,
Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow, each bidding rejoice,
Saul's fame in the light it was made for—as when, dare I say,
The Lord's army, in rapture of service, strains through its array,
And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot,—"Saul!" cried I, and stopped,
And waited the thing that should follow. Then Saul, who hung propped
By the tent's cross-support in the centre, was struck by his name.
Have ye seen when Spring's arrowy summons goes right to the aim,
And some mountain, the last to withstand her, that held (he alone
While the vale laughed in freedom and flowers) on a broad bust of stone
A year's snow bound about for a breast plate, leaves grasp of the sheet?
Fold on fold all at once it crowds thunderously down to his feet,
And there fronts you, stark, black, but alive yet, your mountain of old,
With his rents, the successive bequeathings of ages untold—

Yea, each harm got in fighting your battles, each
furrow and scar
Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the tempest—all
hail, there you are!
Now again to be softened with verdure, again hold
the nest
Of the dove, tempt the goat, and its young to the
green on its crest
For their food in the ardors of summer. One long
shudder thrilled
All the tent till the very air tingled, then sank and
was stilled
At the King's self left standing before me, released
and aware.
What was gone, what remained? All to traverse
'twixt hope and despair;
Death was past, life not come; so he waited.
Awhile his right hand
Held the brow, helped the eyes left too vacant
forthwith to remand
To their place what new objects should enter;
'twas Saul as before.
I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes, nor was
hurt any more
Than by slow, pallid sunsets in autumn, ye watch
from the shore
At their sad level gaze o'er the ocean—a sun's slow
decline

Over hills which, resolved in stern silence, o'erlap
and entwine
Base with base to knit strength more intensely; so,
arm folded arm
O'er the chest whose slow heavings subsided.

XI

What spell or what charm,
(For awhile there was trouble within me,) what
next should I urge
To sustain him where song had restored him? Song
filled to the verge
His cup with the wine of this life, pressing all that
it yields
Of mere fruitage, the strength and the beauty, be-
yond, on what fields,
Glean a vintage more potent and perfect to brighten
the eye
And bring blood to the lip, and commend them the
cup they put by?
He saith, "It is good"; still he drinks not; he lets
me praise life,
Gives assent, yet would die for his own part.

XII

Then fancies grew rife
Which had come long ago on the pasture, when
round me the sheep

Fed in silence—above, the one eagle wheeled slow
as in sleep;
And I lay in my hollow and mused on the world
that might lie
'Neath his ken, though I saw but the strip 'twixt the
hill and the sky;
And I laughed—"Since my days are ordained to be
passed with my flocks,
Let me people at least, with my fancies, the plains
and the rocks;
Dream the life I am never to mix with, and image
the show
Of mankind as they live in those fashions I hardly
shall know!
Schemes of life, its best rules and right uses, the
courage that gains,
And the prudence that keeps what men strive for."
And now these old trains
Of vague thought came again; I grew surer; so,
once more the string
Of my harp made response to my spirit, as thus—

XIII

"Yea, my King,"
I began—"thou dost well in rejecting mere comforts
that spring

From the mere mortal life held in common by man
and by brute;
In our flesh grows the branch of this life, in our
soul it bears fruit.
Thou hast marked the slow rise of the tree, how its
stem trembled first
Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's antler; then
safely outburst
The fan-branches all round; and thou mindest how
these too, in turn,
Broke a-bloom and the palm tree seemed perfect;
yet more was to learn,
E'en the good that comes in with the palm-fruit.
Our dates shall we slight
When their juice brings a cure for all sorrow? or
care for the plight
Of the palm's self whose slow growth produced
them? Not so, stem and branch
Shall decay, nor be known in their place, while the
palm-tree shall stanch
Every wound of man's spirit in winter. I pour
thee such wine.
Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for! The
spirit be thine!
By the spirit when age shall o'ercome thee, thou
still shalt enjoy
More indeed than at first when unconscious, the
life of a boy.

Crush that life, and behold its wine running! Each
deed thou has done
Dies, revives, goes to work in the world; until e'en
as the sun
Looking down on the earth, though clouds spoil him,
though tempests efface,
Can find nothing his own deed produced not, must
everywhere trace
The results of his past summer-prime, so each ray of
thy will
Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over,
shall thrill
Thy whole people, the countless, with ardor, till
they too give forth
A like cheer to their sons, who in turn, fill the South
and the North
With the radiance thy deed was the germ of. Carouse in the past!
But the license of the age has its limits; thou diest
at last;
As the lion when age dims his eyeball, the rose at
her height,
So with man—so his power and his beauty forever
take flight.
No! Again a long draught of my soul-wine!
Look forth o'er the years!
Thou hast done now with eyes for the actual; begin
with the seer's!

Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale make his tomb—bid arise
A gray mountain of marble built four-square, till, built to the skies,
Let it mark where the great First King slumbers: whose fame would ye know?
Up above see the rock's naked face, where the record shall go
In great characters cut by the scribe,—such was Saul, so he did;
With the sages directing the work, by the populace chid,
For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised there! Which fault to amend,
In the grove with his kind grows the cedar, whereon they shall spend
(See, in tablets 'tis level before them) their praise, and record
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story—the statesman's great word
Side by side with the poet's sweet comment. The river's awave
With the smooth paper-reeds grazing each other when prophet winds rave;
So the pen gives unborn generations their due and their part
In thy being! Then, first of the mighty, thank God that thou art!"

XIV

And behold while I sang . . . but O Thou who
didst grant me that day,
And before it not seldom hast granted thy help to
essay,
Carry on and complete an adventure, my shield and
my sword
In that act where my soul was thy servant, thy word
was my word,—
Still be with me, who then at the summit of human
endeavor
And scaling the highest, man's thoughts could, gazed
hopeless as ever
On the new stretch of heaven above me—till, mighty
to save,
Just one lift of thy hand cleared that distance—
God's throne from man's grave—
Let me tell out my tale to its ending—my voice to
my heart
Which can scarce dare believe in what marvels last
night I took part,
As this morning I gather the fragments, alone with
my sheep,
And still fear lest the terrible glory evanish like
sleep!
For I wake in the gray, dewy covert, while Hebron
upheaves

The dawn struggling with night on his shoulder, and Kidron retrieves
Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine.

XV

I say then,—my song
While I sang thus, assuring the monarch, and ever more strong
Made a proffer of good to console him—he slowly resumed
His old motions and habitudes kingly. The right hand replumed
His black locks to their wonted composure, adjusted the swathes
Of his turban, and see—the huge sweat that his countenance bathes
He wipes off with the robe; and he girds now his loins as of yore,
And feels slow for the armlets of price, with the clasps set before.
He is Saul, ye remember in glory, ere error had bent
The broad brow from the daily communion; and still, though much spent
Be the life and the bearing that front you, the same, God did choose,

To receive what a man may waste, desecrate, never
quite lose.
So sank he along by the tent-prop till, stayed by the
pile
Of his armor and war-cloak and garments, he leaned
there awhile,
And sat out my singing,—one arm around the tent-
prop, to raise
His bent head, and the other hung slack—till I
touched on the praise
I foresaw from all men in all time, to the man
patient there;
And thus ended, the harp falling forward. Then
first I was 'ware
That he sat, as I say, with my head just above his
vast knees
Which were thrust out on each side around me, like
oak-roots which please
To encircle a lamb when it slumbers. I looked up
to know
If the best I could do had brought solace; he spoke
not, but slow
Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till he laid it
with care
Soft and grave, but in mild settled will, on my brow;
through my hair
The large fingers were pushed, and he bent back
my head with kind power—

All my face back, intent to peruse it, as men do a flower.
Thus held he me there with his great eyes that scrutinized mine—
And oh, all my heart, how it loved him! but where was the sign?
I yearned, "Could I help thee, my father, inventing a bliss,
I would add, to that life of the past, both the future and this;
I would give thee new life altogether, as good, ages hence,
As this moment, had love but the warrant, love's heart to dispense!"

XVI

Then the truth came upon me. No harp more—no song more! outbroke—
"I have gone the whole round of creation; I saw and I spoke;
I, a work of God's hand for that purpose, received in my brain
And pronounced on the rest of his handwork—returned him again
His creation's approval or censure; I spoke as I saw;

I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love, yet all's law.
Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me. Each faculty tasked
To perceive him, has gained an abyss, where a dew-drop was asked.
Have I knowledge? Confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.
Have I forethought? How purblind, how blank to the Infinite Care!
Do I task any faculty highest, to image success?
I but open my eyes, and perfection, no more and no less,
In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod.
And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it, too)
The submission of man's nothing-perfect to God's all-complete,
As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to his feet.
Yet with all this abounding experience, this deity known,

I shall dare to discover some province, some gift of
my own.
There's a faculty pleasant to exercise, hard to hood-
wink,
I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I laugh as I
think)
Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it, wot ye, I
worst
E'en the Giver in one gift! Behold, I could love
if I durst!
But I sink the pretension as fearing a man may
o'ertake
God's own speed in the one way of love; I abstain
for love's sake.
What, my soul? See thus far and no further? when doors great and small
Nine and ninety flew open at our touch? Should
the hundredth appall?
In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the
greatest of all?
Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate
gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it?
Here the parts shift?
Here, the creature surpass the Creator? the end,
what Began?
Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for
this man,

And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who
yet alone can?
Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare will,
much less power,
To bestow on this Saul what I sang of, the mar-
vellous dower
Of the life he was gifted and filled with? to make
such a soul,
Such a body, and then such an earth for insphering
the whole?
And doth it not enter my mind (as my warm tears
attest)
These good things being given, to go on, and give
one more, the best?
Ay, to save and redeem and restore him, maintain
at the height
This perfection,—succeed with life's dayspring,
death's minute of night?
Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch Saul the
mistake,
Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now, and bid him
awake
From the dream, the probation, the prelude, to find
himself set
Clear and safe in new light and new life, a harmony
yet
To be run, and continued, and ended,—who knows?
—or endure!

The man taught enough by life's dream, of the rest
to make sure;
By the pain-throb, triumphantly winning intensified
bliss,
And the next world's reward and repose by the
struggles in this.

XVII

"I believe it! 'Tis thou, God, that givest, tis I
who receive;
In the first is the last, in thy will is my power to
believe.
All's one gift; thou canst grant it moreover, as
prompt to my prayer
As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms
to the air.
From thy will stream the worlds, life and nature,
thy dread Sabaoth;
I will?—the mere atoms despise me! Why am I
not loth
To look that, even that in the face, too? Why is
it I dare
Think but lightly of such impuissance? What stops
my despair?
This;—'tis not what man doth which exalts him,
but what man would do!

See the King; I would help him but cannot, the wishes fall through.
Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to enrich,
To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would—knowing which,
I know that my service is perfect. Oh, speak through me now
Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou—so wilt thou!
So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown—
And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no breath,
Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death!
As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being beloved.
He who did most, shall bear most; that strongest shall stand the most weak.
'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh, that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be

A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like
to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a Hand
like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee!
See the Christ stand!"

XVIII

I know not too well how I found my way home in
the night.
There were witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and
to right
Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the
aware;
I repressed, I got through them as hardly, as
strugglingly there,
As a runner beset by the populace famished for
news—
Life or death. The whole earth was awakened, hell
loosed with her crews;
And the stars of night beat with emotion, and
tingled and shot
Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowledge; but
I fainted not,
For the Hand still impelled me at once and sup-
ported, suppressed
All the tumult, and quenched it with quiet, and holy
behest,

Till the rapture was sunk in itself, and the earth sank to rest.
Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had withered from earth
Not so much, but I saw it die out in the day's tender birth
In the gathered intensity brought to the gray of the hills
In the shuddering forest's held breath; in the sudden wind-thrills;
In the startled wild beasts that bore off, each with eye sidling still
Though averted with wonder and dread; in the birds stiff and chill
That rose heavily, as I approached them, made stupid with awe;
E'en the serpent that slid away silent, he felt the new law.
The same stared in the white humid faces upturned by the flowers;
The same worked in the heart of the cedar and moved the vine-bowers;
And the little brooks witnessing murmured, persistent and low,
With their obstinate, all but hushed voices, "E'en so, it is so!"

ROBERT BROWNING

A LEGEND OF SERVICE

IT pleased the Lord of Angels (praise His name)
To hear, one day, report from those who came
With pitying sorrow, or exultant joy,
To tell of earthly tasks in His employ;
For some were sorry when they saw how slow
The stream of heavenly love on earth must flow;
And some were glad because their eyes had seen,
Along its banks, fresh flowers and living green.
So, at a certain hour, before the throne,
The youngest angel, Asmiel, stood alone;
Nor glad, nor sad, but full of earnest thought,
And thus his tidings to the Master brought:
"Lord, in the city Lupon I have found
Three servants of thy holy name, renowned
Above their fellows. One is very wise,
With thoughts that ever range above the skies;
And one is gifted with the golden speech
That makes men glad to hear when he will teach;
And one, with no rare gift or grace endued,
Has won the people's love by doing good.
With three such saints Lupon is trebly blest;
But, Lord, I fain would know which loves Thee best?"

Then spake the Lord of Angels, to whose look
The hearts of all are like an open book;
"In every soul the secret thought I read
And well I know who loves me best indeed.
But every life has pages vacant still,
Whereon a man may write the thing he will;
Therefore I read in silence, day by day,
And wait for hearts untaught to learn my way.
But thou shalt go to Lupon, to the three
Who serve me there, and take this word from me;
Tell each of them his Master bids him go
Along to Spiran's huts, across the snow;
There he shall find a certain task for me;
But what, I do not tell to them nor thee.
Give thou the message, make my word the test,
And crown for me the one who answers best."

Silent the angel stood, with folded hands,
To take the imprint of his Lord's commands;
Then drew one breath, obedient and elate,
And passed, the self-same hour, through Lupon's gate.
First to the Temple door he made his way;
And there, because it was an Holy-day,
He saw the folks by thousands thronging, stirred
By ardent thirst to hear the preacher's word.
Then, while the echoes murmured Bernol's name,

Through aisles that hushed behind him, Bernol came;
Strung to the keenest pitch of conscious might,
With lips prepared and firm, and eyes alight.
One moment at the pulpit steps he knelt
In silent prayer, and on his shoulder felt
The angel's hand;—"The Master bids thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts across the snow,
To serve Him there." Then Bernol's hidden face
Went white as death, and for about the space
Of ten slow heart beats there was no reply;
Till Bernol looked around and whispered, "Why?"
But answer to his question came there none;
The angel sighed, and with the sigh was gone.

Within the humble house where Malvin spent
His studious years, on holy things intent,
Sweet stillness reigned; and there the angel found
The saintly sage immersed in thought profound,
Weaving with patient toil and willing care
A web of wisdom, wonderful and fair;
A seamless robe for Truth's great bridal meet,
And needing but one thread to be complete.
Then Asmiel touched his hand, and broke the thread
Of fine-spun thought, and very gently said,
"The One of whom thou thinkest bids thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts, across the snow
To serve Him there." With sorrow and surprise

Malvin looked up, reluctance in his eyes,
The broken thought, the strangeness of the call,
The perilous passage of the mountain wall,
The solitary journey, and the length
Of ways unknown, too great for his frail strength,
Appalled him. With a doubtful brow
He scanned the doubtful task, and muttered "How?"
But Asmiel answered, as he turned to go,
With cold, disheartened voice, "I do not know."

Now as he went, with fading hope, to seek
The third and last to whom God bade him speak,
Scarce twenty steps away whom should he meet
But Femor, hurrying cheerful down the street,
With ready heart that faced his work like play,
And joyed to find it greater every day.
The angel stopped him with uplifted hand,
And gave without delay his Lord's command;
"He whom thou servest here would have thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts, across the snow,
To serve Him there." Ere Asmiel breathed again
The eager answer leaped to meet him, "When?"
The angel's face with inward joy grew bright,
And all his figure glowed with heavenly light;
He took the golden circlet from his brow
And gave the crown to Femor, answering, "Now."
"For thou hast met the Master's bidden test,

And I have found the man who loves Him best.
Not thine, nor mine, to question or reply
When he commands us, asking 'how?' or 'why?'
He knows the cause; His ways are wise and just;
Who serves the King must serve with perfect trust."

HENRY VAN DYKE

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR

SPEAK! Speak! thou fearful guest!
Who with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No saga taught thee!

Take heed that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern land,
By the wild Baltic strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.

Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Oft as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest shade
Our vows we plighted.
Under its loosened vest

Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed against the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And thought she blushed and smiled
I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,

Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
'Death' was the helmsman's hail,
'Death without quarter!'
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;

Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey, laden,—
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we Westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leaward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands, looking seaward.

"There lived we many years,
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;

Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another.

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my war-like gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! Skoal!"
Thus the tale ended.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

OF all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,
Witch astride, or a human hack,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's out of Marblehead.
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop, like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls with bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads sang;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him! He sailed away
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's people on her deck.
"Lay by! Lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain.
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Fathoms deep, in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forever more,
Mother and sister, wife and maid,

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea—
Looked for the coming that might not be.
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Through the street on either side
Up flew windows, doors flung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives grey,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim
Like an Indian idol, glum and grim.
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear

Of voices shouting far and near;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said "God has touched him—why should we?"
Said an old wife mourning her only son
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run."
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose;
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE
(1571)

THE old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
The ringers ran, by two by three;
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
Play uppe, 'The Brides of Enderby.'"

Men say it was a stolen tyde—
The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in mine ears doth still abide
The message that the bells let fall;
And there was nought of strange, beside
The flight of mews and peewits pied
By millions crouched on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the door,
My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
Lay sinking in the barren skies;

And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's fair wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews are falling,
Farre away I heard her song.
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along;
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
"For the dews will soon be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow,
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow,
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow
From the clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow
Jetty to the milking shed."

If it be long, ay, long ago,
When I beginne to think how long,

THE HIGH TIDE

Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

Alle fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadowe mote be seene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
The steeple towered from out the greene;
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The swanherds where their sedges are
Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
And shepherde lads I heard afarre,
And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came down that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked uppe into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They sayde. "And why should this thing be?

What danger lowers by land or sea?
They ring the tune of Enderby!

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pyrate galleys warping down;
For shippes ashore beyond the scorpe,
They have not spared to wake the towne.
But when the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pyrates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby?' "

I looked without, and lo! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main:
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is down,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place."
He shook as one that looks on death;
"God save you, mother!" straight he saith;
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good sonne, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long;

And ere yon bells beganne to play
Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left; "Ho Enderby!"
They rang, "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped.
It swept with thunderous noises loud;
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.
And rearing Lindis backward pressed,
Shook all her trembling bankes amaine;
Then madly at the eygre's breast
Flung uppe her weltering walls again.
Then bankes came down with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet;
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

THE HIGH TIDE

Upon the roofe we sat that night,
The noise of bells went sweeping by;
I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awesome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
From roofe to roofe who fearless rowed;
And I—my sonne was at my side,
And yet the ruddy beacon glowed;
I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
When the water winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
Shiver, quiver;

Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Lightfoot, rise and follow;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty to the milking shed."
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth!"

And didst thou visit him no more?
Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place.

THE HIGH TIDE

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas!
To manye more than myne and mee;
But each will mourn his own (she saith)
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

JEAN INGELOW

INDEX OF AUTHORS

PAGE

ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM 130
ANONYMOUS 35
ARNOLD, MATTHEW 30, 148
BLAKE, WILLIAM 25
BROWN, THOMAS E. 107
BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT 46, 141
BROWNING, ROBERT 77, 82, 230
BUNYAN, JOHN 66
BURNS, ROBERT 34
CARMAN, BLISS 73, 96
COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR 178
CONKLING, HILDA 78, 105, 117, 143
CUNNINGHAM, ALLEN 101
DE LA MARE, WALTER . . . 7, 119, 145, 157, 219
DOBELL, SYDNEY 84
DRINKWATER, JOHN 109, 217
FIELD, EUGENE 23
FYLEMAN, ROSE 138
GILBERT, WILLIAM S. 225
HENLEY, WILLIAM ERNEST 4
HERRICK, ROBERT 74
HOGG, JAMES 133
HOVEY, RICHARD 100
HUNT, LEIGH 146
INGELOW, JEAN 49, 272
KEATS, JOHN 16, 126
KIPLING, RUYDARD 6, 89, 159

INDEX OF AUTHORS

PAGE

LEAMY, EDMUND 28, 94
LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH 261
LOWELL, AMY 108
MASEFIELD, JOHN 87, 103, 111
MEYNELL, ALICE 11
MILTON, JOHN 39
MOODY, WILLIAM VAUGHN 20
NICHOLS, ROBERT 75
NOYES, ALFRED 129, 164
O'SULLIVAN, SEUMAS 12, 120
ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL 68, 171
SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM 67, 86, 118
SHARP, WILLIAM 14, 106, 147
SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE 60
SMART, CHRISTOPHER 65
SOLOMON 8
STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS 27, 45, 139
TAYLOR, BAYARD 47
TENNANT, PAMELA 37, 124, 214
TENNYSON, ALFRED 43, 140, 206
VAN DYKE, HENRY 97, 256
WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF 113, 221, 268
WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM . . 10, 32, 41, 44, 80
YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER 3, 123

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

	PAGE
A fairy band are we	129
A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by	10
A garden is a lovesome thing	107
A late lark twitters in the quiet skies	4
A little garden on a bleak hillside	108
A wet sheet and a flowing sea	101
Across the seas of wonderland	164
Alone upon the housetops	6
Along the earth and up the sky	22
Behold her, single in the field	32
Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen	133
Build at Kallunborg by the sea	221
By this the sun was all one glitter	111
Come, dear children, let us away	148
Come down at dawn	109
Come up here, O dusty feet	139
Deep black against the dying glow	106
Fair daffodils, we weep to see	74
First came the primrose	84
From our hidden places	120
From the desert I come to thee	47
Go from me	46
Green little vaulter in the sunny grass	146
Hail to thee, blithe spirit	60
He sang of God	65
He that is down need fear no fall	66
How see you echo?	124
Husheen, the herons are crying	12
I am fevered with the sunset	100

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

	PAGE
I am the rose of Sharon	8
I cannot see fairies	117
I love daffiodils	78
I must go down to the seas again	103
I never watch the sun set	94
I saw you toss the kites on high	27
I stood within the heart of God	20
I wandered lonely as a cloud	80
I will arise and go now	3
I wish I were where Helen lies	35
If I have faltered more or less	45
It is an ancient Mariner	178
It is good to be out on the road	87
It pleased the Lord of Angels	256
Let me not to the marriage of true minds	67
Long, long, long the trail	97
Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar	37
My heart aches	16
Now has the blue-eyed spring	75
Now the four-way lodge is opened	89
O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms?	126
Of all the rides since the birth of time	268
Of wounds and sore defeat	21
Oh, honey, li'l honey	28
Oh, to be in England	82
Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast	34
On either side the river lie	206
Once more in misted April	73
Once . . . once upon a time	157
Over hill, over dale	118
Piping down the valleys wild	25
Said Abner, "At last thou art come"	230
She walks—the lady of my delight	11
Sleep, little pigeon, and fold your wings	23
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul	7

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

	PAGE
Speak! Speak! thou fearful guest	261
Sweet and low	43
The blessed damozel leaned out	171
The fairies have never a penny to spend	138
The hills are going somewhere	105
The jolly men at Feckenham	217
The old mayor climbed the belfry tower	272
The sea is calm tonight	30
The splendor falls on castle walls	140
The wind blows out of the gates of the day	123
The world is too much with us	44
The year's at the Spring	77
There is something in the autumn	96
There's no dew left on the daisies and clover	49
There was a day, so country legends tell	214
There were three cherry trees once	219
This is that blessed Mary	68
This is the month	39
Three years she grew in sun and shower	41
Tree-toad is a small gray person	143
'Twas on the shores that round our coast	225
Under the greenwood tree	86
Unwarmed by any sunset light	113
Up the airy mountain	130
What was he doing, the great god Pan?	141
When the moon shines o'er the corn	147
When spring-time flushes the desert grass	159
While sways the restless sea	14
Will he ever be weary of wandering?	119
Won't you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?	145

INDEX OF TITLES

		PAGE
April Morning, An	*Bliss Carman*	73
At Sea	*Allen Cunningham*	101
Autumnal Evening, An	*William Sharp*	106
Ballad of the King's Jest, The	*Rudyard Kipling*	159
Bedouin Song	*Bayard Taylor*	47
Blessed Damozel, The	*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*	171
Catch for Spring, A	*Robert Nichols*	75
Celestial Surgeon, The	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	45
Chanted Calendar, A	*Sydney Dobell*	84
Daffodils	*William Wordsworth*	80
Dover Beach	*Matthew Arnold*	30
Echo	*Pamela Tennant*	124
"Everlasting Mercy, The" Lines from	*John Masefield*	111
Faeries' Song	*William Butler Yeats*	123
Fair Helen	*Anon*	35
Fairies	*Hilda Conkling*	117
Fairies, The	*William Allingham*	130
Fairies have never a penny to spend, The	*Rose Fyleman*	138
Fairy Bread	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	139
Fairy Land	*William Shakespeare*	118
Feckenham Men, The	*John Drinkwater*	217
Feet of the Young Men, The	*Rudyard Kipling*	89
Field Mouse, The	*William Sharp*	147
Forsaken Merman, The	*Matthew Arnold*	148
Forty Singing Seamen	*Alfred Noyes*	164

INDEX OF TITLES

		PAGE
HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE, THE	*Jean Ingelow*	272
HILLS	*Hilda Conkling*	105
HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD	*Robert Browning*	82
HORNS OF ELFLAND	*Alfred Tennyson*	140
KALLUNBORG CHURCH	*John Greenleaf Whittier*	221
KILMENY	*James Hogg*	133
LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI	*John Keats*	126
LADY OF SHALOTT, THE	*Alfred Tennyson*	206
LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE, THE	*William Butler Yeats*	3
LEGEND OF SERVICE, A	*Henry Van Dyke*	256
LEGEND OF THE SAINTFOIN, THE	*Pamela Tennant*	37
LEGEND OF THE TORTOISE, THE	*Pamela Tennant*	214
LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES	*Henry Van Dyke*	97
LITTLE BLUE PIGEON	*Eugene Field*	23
LITTLE GARDEN, A	*Amy Lowell*	108
LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL, THE	*Rudyard Kipling*	6
LULLABY	*Walter De La Mare*	7
LULLABY	*Edmund Leamy*	28
LULLABY	*Seumas O'Sullivan*	12
LULLABY	*Alfred Tennyson*	43
MARGARITAE SORORI	*William E. Henley*	4
MARTHA	*Walter De La Mare*	157
MARY'S GIRLHOOD	*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*	68
MOCKING FAIRY, THE	*Walter De La Mare*	145
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, A	*Elizabeth B. Browning*	141
MY GARDEN	*Thomas E. Brown*	107
ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY	*John Milton*	39
ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE	*John Keats*	16
OH, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST	*Robert Burns*	34
OTHERS, THE	*Seumas O'Sullivan*	120

INDEX OF TITLES

		PAGE
PANDORA'S SONGS FROM "THE FIREBRINGER"	*William Vaughn Moody*	20
PIPING DOWN THE VALLEY'S WILD	*William Blake*	25
RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER, THE	*Samuel T. Coleridge*	178
SAUL	*Robert Browning*	230
SEA FEVER	*John Masefield*	103
SEA GYPSY, THE	*Richard Hovey*	100
SHEPHERD BOY SINGS, THE	*John Bunyan*	66
SHEPHERDESS, THE	*Alice Meynell*	11
SKELETON IN ARMOR, THE	*Henry W. Longfellow*	261
SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE	*John Greenleaf Whittier*	268
SLEEP	*William Sharp*	14
"SNOWBOUND," LINES FROM	*John Greenleaf Whittier*	113
SOLITARY REAPER, THE	*William Wordsworth*	32
SONG	*Alfred Noyes*	129
SONG FROM "PIPPA PASSES"	*Robert Browning*	77
SONG OF DAVID, THE	*Christopher Smart*	65
SONG OF SONGS, THE	*Solomon*	8
SONGS OF SEVEN	*Jean Ingelow*	49
SONNET, A	*Elizabeth B. Browning*	46
SONNET, A	*William Wordsworth*	44
SPRING SONG	*Hilda Conkling*	78
SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER	*John Drinkwater*	109
TEWKSBURY ROAD	*John Masefield*	87
THREE CHERRY TREES, THE	*Walter De La Mare*	219
THREE YEARS SHE GREW	*William Wordsworth*	41
TO A SKYLARK	*Percy Bysshe Shelley*	60
TO DAFFODILS	*Robert Herrick*	74
TO SLEEP	*William Wordsworth*	10
TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET	*Leigh Hunt*	146
TREE-TOAD	*Hilda Conkling*	143
TRUE LOVE	*William Shakespeare*	67

INDEX OF TITLES

		PAGE
UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE	*William Shakespeare*	86
VAGABOND SONG, A	*Bliss Carman*	96
VISIONS	*Edmund Leamy*	94
WILL EVER?	*Walter De La Mare*	119
WIND, THE	*Robert Louis Stevenson*	27
YARN OF THE NANCY BELL, THE	*William S. Gilbert*	225

W9-DDK-785